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ESSAYS

BY

WILLIAM HAZLITT

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LONDON: W. B. CLIVE.

ESSAYS

BY

WILLIAM HAZLITT

BEING A COLLECTION OF TWENTY ESSAYS

EDITED BY

G. E. HOLLINGWORTH, M.A. Lond.

AUTHOR OF "A PRIMER OF LITERARY CRITICISM," EDITOR OF SHAKESPEARE: "CORIOLANUS," "1 HENRY IV.," "HAMLET"

Second Impression

London: W. B. CLIVE

University Tutorial Press Ltd.

High St., New Oxford St., W.C.

1927

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE UNIVERSITY TUTORIAL PRESS LD. AT THE
BURLINGTON PRESS, FOXTON, NEAR CAMBRIDGE.

PREFACE.

This collection of twenty Essays by William Hazlitt deals with a wide variety of subjects, and may accordingly be regarded as fairly representative of his work.

The work is edited with special regard to the needs of Matriculation candidates, and great care has been taken not to burden the Introduction and Notes with unnecessary detail, but to give only such information as is indispensable for the understanding and appreciation of the text.

The Notes on seven of these Essays—Common Sense, On Nicknames, Why Distant Objects Please, On Respectable People, On Fashion, On Prejudice, and On Cant and Hypocrisy—have been taken unaltered from material placed at the disposal of the present editor.

The Essays prescribed for the Matriculation Examination of the University of London 1927 and 1928 are indicated by asterisks prefixed to the titles of the Essays in the Table of Contents which will be found overleaf.

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INTRODUCTION.

Life and Works of Hazlitt.—William Hazlitt, born in 1778, was the fourth child of a Unitarian minister, a saintly but intelligent man who corresponded with Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price, the two high-priests of "advanced" religious thought at that day. His family came from Ireland, and returned there soon after Hazlitt's birth. There the elder Hazlitt fell into such disfavour with the English officers for his support of the Americans in the War of Independence, that he thought it wisest to leave for what was, by the time he reached it, the United States. Unitarianism, however, had made less progress in America than at home, a settled ministry seemed unobtainable, and by 1787 the family were back in England and settled at Wem in Shropshire. Hazlitt remembered all his life the delicious taste of barberries, but otherwise America seems to have made no impression upon him : he was evidently a thoroughly normal boy.

He was intended for the ministry and, when old enough, was sent to Hackney College for training. But though his father's interest in politics was strong in him too, he did not share his father's zeal for the gospel : it was rather the intellectual than the emotional side of religion which appealed to him. Before he entered College he had begun to write his *Project for a New Theory of Civil and Criminal Legislation*, and with characteristic obstinacy, he persuaded his lecturer to accept this, refurbished and continued, in lieu of several themes which he had failed to present. An ambitious *Essay on the Principles of Human Action* occupied a good deal more of his college time, and his father became alarmed for his progress in more definitely ministerial studies. But Hazlitt's disinclination for his father's vocation had increased at Hackney, at that time

reputed a seminary for the manufacture of infidels; he developed "nervous disorders," and in 1796 persuaded his father to let him give up all thought of the ministry.

Back at Wem, he spent two years in desultory study and formed a friendship which influenced his whole succeeding life—that friendship with Coleridge, whose inception he so vividly describes in *My First Acquaintance with Poets*. He attacked with new zest his old *Essay on the Principles of Human Action*.

Failure to complete the essay to his satisfaction, however, drove him to attempt painting, in which his elder brother John had already gained some reputation for miniatures. From 1799 to 1802 he studied his new art, paying that first visit to the Louvre which has left so deep a mark upon much of his literary work, including the last three essays in this selection.

In 1803 he renewed his friendship with Wordsworth and Coleridge—a friendship broken, as far as Wordsworth was concerned, by the poet's disgust at some amorous escapade of Hazlitt's with a local beauty. Hazlitt now became intimate with Charles and Mary Lamb and, despairing of painting, as he had before despaired of writing, exchanged brush for pen, completed at last his laborious essay, and, heartened by his success, took to literature for the rest of his life.

By 1807 he had written a book on politics, a *Reply* to Malthus's theory that poverty was inevitable as a necessary check on population, and an abridgment of the philosophical Tucker's *Light of Nature Pursued*. He had also found time to become engaged to Miss Stoddart, a friend of Mary Lamb, not in her first youth, but an heiress in a small way.

Married and settled in his wife's house at Winterslow, he was visited by the Lambs, and wrote a *Life of Holcroft*. Finding himself in need of money, however, he came to London, lectured on English philosophy, and took to journalism, writing for the *Morning Chronicle*, and, later, for the *Champion* and *Examiner*. His unkind review of Wordsworth's *Excursion* for this last paper, more even

than the fact that he had borrowed without permission Lamb's review copy and so prevented his friend from writing a favourable criticism of the poem, led to the breach with Lamb referred to in his essays.

Soon afterwards Hazlitt joined the staff of the *Edinburgh Review* and, from 1815 to 1816, wrote the series of essays known as *The Round Table*. It was about this time that, finding a tendency to drunkenness growing upon him, he became a total abstainer for the rest of his life, drinking strong tea as excessively as he had before drunk strong waters.

In 1817 Hazlitt became dramatic critic to *The Times*, and during the following three years he delivered three sets of lectures, afterwards published, *Lectures on the English Poets*, *Lectures on the Comic Writers*, and *Lectures on the Age of Elizabeth*. But he was neither so happy nor so prosperous as his record of work would suggest. Those were days when a man's literary work, morals, and intelligence were judged by his politics : Tory magazines abused Whig writers, Whig magazines abused Tory writers. Hazlitt was not merely a Whig ; he was what would to-day be called a Red : born into an atmosphere of struggle for religious freedom, nurtured in America in an atmosphere of enthusiasm for political freedom, caught up, as a young man, in the full fervour of Coleridge's ardour for revolutionary France—a fervour which he kept long after his zeal for Coleridge and Coleridge's zeal for France had waned—he did not leave his first love when the Terror and our wars with France drove many of his friends to Toryism. He recognised that the brutalised condition of the French peasantry at once justified the Revolution and made its excesses inevitable : where he went further than the modern historian is generally prepared to go was in his admiration for Napoleon—not merely at first as the saviour of the Revolution, but in his later phase of despot and conqueror. A Whig was bad enough in the eyes of the Tory magazines ; a Republican was worse ; a Buonapartist, even though Napoleon was at St. Helena, was the incarnation of Satan. *Blackwood's Magazine*, which had

an unenviable reputation for the scurrility of its attacks, published an article so scandalous that Hazlitt, who had endured other onslaughts in silence, threatened an action for libel—a threat which brought *Blackwood's*, on the urgent representation of Murray, who was connected with it, to agree to a settlement out of court. Soon afterwards Hazlitt, in his *Letter to Gifford*, attacked the chief of his critic-enemies, who had often assailed him in *The Quarterly*, as violently but not as libellously as he had himself been attacked. In the same year he published his *Political Essays*.

In 1820 he joined the *London Magazine*, and in that and the next year wrote his famous Table-Talk essays. Another quarrel, this time with Leigh Hunt, followed. Hazlitt had published a very frank account of Hunt's failings as a writer and a man, and was amazed to find his friend annoyed. The quarrel was closed by Hazlitt's suggestion that Hunt should write a similarly candid article about *him*.

But it was not only that his political views, his curious insensitiveness to others' feelings and his Irish temper made him unpopular, and therefore restricted his sales and his income : it was not only that he was careless in money-matters and constantly in debt : he had domestic troubles, too. His unromantic marriage was a failure; he separated from his wife and, in 1823, with her concurrence and assistance, obtained a Scottish divorce, delivering a series of lectures at Glasgow to fill up the necessary period of residence in Scotland.

Shortly afterwards he was arrested for debt, and his troubles were increased by the failure of his publisher.

But worse than all this was Hazlitt's frantic middle-aged passion for his landlord's daughter. She, like a sensible girl, rejected his advances; consequently, she became in his mind a deceitful fury. Not content with wearying his friends with his laments, he gave the world a full account of his " romance " in *Liber Amoris*, a book which brought upon him ridicule and still greater unpopularity.

In 1824 he consoled himself with a widow and went for

a long wedding-tour through France, Italy, and Switzerland. His only surviving son, to whom Hazlitt was devoted, joined them after a month. The new wife apparently objected to the attitude of her stepson, who felt that his own mother had been unfairly treated. Hazlitt returned to England without his wife, but, contrary to his expectation, she did not follow him, and he never saw her again. Two years later he died.

His chief works during these last few years were *The Spirit of the Age*, a series of sketches of contemporaries as candid—and often as acid—as usual, the collection of essays known as *The Plain Speaker*, and his *Life of Napoleon*.

Hazlitt's Character.—This sketch of Hazlitt's life has already revealed some of his most marked traits—his unhappy knack of quarrelling with his friends; his happier and rarer knack of inspiring such affection that his friends generally made up their quarrels (Wordsworth and Coleridge were exceptions); his industry; the roughness of fibre and lack of taste which allowed him to make public attacks on his friends and to give the world his love-sick ragings; his interest in metaphysics, in painting and in politics. The essays in this selection will further illustrate those sides of his character, and will disclose still other qualities—his sturdy common-sense; the general fairness of his judgments; his delight in all sides of life, prize-fights, country rambles, poetry, plays, talk, rackets, even juggling.

There are, indeed, strong resemblances between Hazlitt and Dr. Johnson: both had a dogmatic and overbearing way, both were common men writ large and broadened out; both were politically prejudiced (though on opposite sides); both enjoyed talk and talked well, both "held both hands before the fire of life"; and both, in an age where heavy drinking was common, took refuge from their own infirmities in excessive tea-drinking. Hazlitt is a lesser Johnson turned Romantic.

Hazlitt as a Romantic.—For Hazlitt was on the modern side in the great war between the so-called Classical school

of literature—the followers of Dryden and Pope—and the Romantic school which revolted against it, and has remained supreme until our own day.

By Hazlitt's time the victory was won, but neither side had yet realised the fact. The heroic couplet of Pope, with its regular halt at the end of each line and its see-saw antitheses—

> Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
> And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer,

was still written by Pope's disciples, but of these disciples none was in even the third rank of poets. And the users of the heroic couplet had themselves ceased to be satisfied with the classical subjects—sketches of the life of "society"; satire against rival authors, against political opponents, against town life and its vices; critical and philosophical disquisitions in verse: Crabbe and Goldsmith had already written sympathetically and intimately of the poor.

With the Romantics who were consciously in revolt, the change in subject was complete. Wordsworth wrote of Nature and of peasant life, Coleridge of wild Oriental scenes and wilder Ancient Mariners, Southey of foreign religions and revolutionary wars, Scott of mediaeval chivalry. The change in subject, like the change in phrasing from conventional "poetic diction," with its *conscious swains* and *finny tribes*, to a free use of beautiful and expressive words, was merely the outcome of a change in spirit. The soul of man had suffered a re-birth; it saw the world with freshly-opened eyes and was filled with awe, with a consuming curiosity, with a passion for freedom, and with an ecstatic delight. Imagination and genius, instead of a hampered and pedestrian reason, led the advance; and even the merely talented writer, instead of trying to express the opinions of the polite, tried to express his own personality.

Hazlitt as Essayist.—It is this Romantic strain which makes the chief value of Hazlitt's work. He was not a man of great originality, brilliant subtlety, mastery of beautiful or striking phrases and of haunting cadences; he had little

imagination and no great range or complexity of feeling. Johnson, with the same drawbacks, wrote essays which are now never read. But Johnson, besides possessing a heavier style than Hazlitt's, was hampered by the tradition of the classical school that self-revelation is " bad form." The main charm of Hazlitt's essays is that they reveal Hazlitt.

Hazlitt as Critic.—But besides this Romantic autobiographical strain, Hazlitt's Romanticism ensures literary criticism at once juster and more in accord with modern taste than Johnson's. For Hazlitt was no bigoted Romantic ; if he loved Rousseau and the best of Wordsworth and Coleridge, he also loved Fielding and Molière, Pope and Hume.

He has a singularly clear and just eye for felicities of situation, phrase or character, and he is in general content to give these. The reader of Hazlitt's critical writings is surprised to find how many of the recognised " beauties " of Shakespeare or of Wordsworth, of Milton or of Spenser were first seized upon by Hazlitt, and with how few of his pronouncements the modern critic would quarrel. He has not, it has been pointed out, Coleridge's power of seeing a literary work as an organic whole, of tracing the development of an author's thought and of revealing the secrets of an author's art. But the average man does not care greatly for these ; what he wants is enthusiasm, a sure eye for a good thing and an ability to give samples. All these Hazlitt offers him : and if his samples—his quotations—have often suffered in handling (Hazlitt is terribly inaccurate), they are still enticing enough, and there are plenty of them.

COMMON SENSE.

Common sense is a rare and enviable quality. It may be truly said that "Its price is above rubies." How many learned men, how many wits, how many geniuses, how many dull and ignorant people, how many cunning knaves, how many well-meaning fools are without it! How few have it, how little do they or others know of it, except from the infallible results—for one of its first requisites is the utter absence of all pretension!

The vulgar laugh at the pedant and enthusiast for the want of it, while they themselves mistake bigotry and narrow-minded notions for it. It is not one of the sciences, but has been well pronounced to be "fairly worth the seven." It is a kind of mental instinct, that feels the air of truth and propriety as the fingers feel objects of touch. It does not consist with ignorance, for we cannot pronounce on what we do not know; and on the other hand, the laying in a stock of knowledge, or mastering any art or science, seems to destroy that native simplicity, and to warp and trammel the unbiassed freedom of mind which is necessary to its receiving and giving their due weight to ordinary and casual impressions.

Common sense is neither a peculiar talent nor a laborious acquirement, but may be regarded as a sound and impartial judgment operating on the daily practice of life, or on what "comes home to the business and bosoms of men"; combined with great attainments and speculative enquiries, it would justly earn the title of *wisdom*; but of the latter we have never known a single instance, though we have met with a few of the former; that is, we have known a number of persons who were wise in the affairs of the world and in what concerned their own interest, but

none who, beyond this, and in judging of general questions, were not the dupes of some flaw of temper, of some weakness or vanity, or even striking advantage of their own.

To give an example of two in illustration. A person may be an excellent scholar, a good mathematician, well versed in law and history, a first-rate chess-player, a dazzling fencer, in a word, a sort of *admirable Crichton*—you are disposed to admire or envy so many talents united—you smile to see him wanting in common sense, and getting into a dispute about a *douceur* to a paltry police-officer, and thinking to interest all Europe and both Houses of Parliament in his success. It is true, he has law and reason on his side, has Grotius and Puffendorf and the *statutes at large* doubled down in dog-ears for the occasion, has a vast and lively apparatus of well-arranged premises and conclusions ready to play off against his adversaries; but he does not consider that he has to deal with interest and custom, those impalpable, intangible essences, that "fear no discipline of human wit." Does he think to check-mate the police? Will he stop the mouth of a hungry tide-waiter with a syllogism? Or supersede a perquisite by the *reductio ad absurdum*? It is a want of common sense, or the not distinguishing properly between the definite and the indefinite.

No one can have arrived at years of discretion without knowing or feeling that he cannot take a single step without some compromise with existing circumstances; that the path of life is intercepted with innumerable turn-pike gates, at which he must pay down the toll of his own convictions and of strict justice; that he cannot walk the streets but by tacit allowance; and that to disregard all impediments in the right line of reason and written forms is to imitate the conduct of *Commodore Trunnion*, who mistook the land for the sea, and went to be married by the wind and compass.

The proofs of this occur every hour of the day—they may not be registered, they may not be remembered, but they are virtually and effectively noted down by the faculty of

common sense, which does not feel its way the less surely because it proceeds often mechanically and blindly.

There may be exceptions indeed to ordinary rules, on which a man may go to martyrdom and a stake (such as that of Hampden and ship-money), but these occur once in a century, and are only met with at the corners of streets by those who have an excess of logical discrimination, and have to pay a certain tax for being too clever by half.

It is the fashion at present among the philosophical vulgar to decry *feeling*, both the name and the thing. It would be difficult, however, to do without it : for this word embraces all that mass of knowledge and of common sense which lies between the extremes of positive proof or demonstration and downright ignorance ; and those who would pragmatically confine their own convictions or those of others to what is absolutely known and understood, would at best become scientific pedants and artificial barbarians.

There are some persons who are the victims of argument ; as there are others who are the slaves of minute details and matters of fact. One class will have a reason for everything, and will admit the greatest absurdities that are formally proposed to them ; the other must have facts to support every conclusion, and can never see an inch beyond their noses. The last have the *organ of individuality* largely developed, and are proportionably deficient in common sense. Their ideas are all local and literal. To borrow the language of a great but obscure metaphysician, their minds are *epileptic* ; that is, are in perpetual throes and convulsions, fasten on every object in their way not to help but to hinder their progress, and have no voluntary power to let go their hold of a particular circumstance, to grasp the whole of any question, or suspend their judgment for an instant. The fact that is before them is everything ; the rest goes for nothing. They are always at cross-purposes with themselves, for their decisions are the result of the last evidence, without any corrective or qualifier in common sense ; in the hunt after proofs, they forget their principles, and gain their point, though they lose their cause.

The Scotch have much of this *matter-of-fact* understanding, and bigotry to personal and actual statistics. They would persuade you that there is no country but Scotland, nothing but what is Scotch. Mr. Mac Alpine shifts the discourse from the metropolis, hurries rapidly over the midland counties, crosses the border, and sits down to an exordium in praise of the "kindly Scot." Charity has its home and hearth by Tweed-side, where he was born and bred, Scotch beggars were quite different from English beggars: there was none of the hard-heartedness towards them that was always shown in England. His mother, though not a rich woman, always received them kindly, and had a bag of meal out of which she always gave them something, as they went their rounds. "Lord! Mr. Mac Alpine!" says Mrs. Mac Alpine, "other people have mothers as well as you, and there are beggars in England as well as Scotland. Why, in Yorkshire, where I was brought up, common beggars used to come round just as you describe, and my mother, who was no richer than yours, used to give them a crust of bread or broken victuals just in the same way; you make such a *fuss* about nothing."

Women are best to set these follies to rights :—

> "They have no figures nor no fantasies,
> Which busy thought draws in the brains of men."

If no great philosophers, they do not want common sense; and are only misled in what lies beyond their sphere of feeling and observation, by taking up the opinions of their *better halves*. The common people in like manner do not want common sense in what falls under their especial cognizance and daily practice.

A country-shoemaker or plough-man understands shoemaking, and can "crack of ploughs and kine," though he knows nothing of the Catholic question. If an old woman in a country-town believes she shall be burnt at stake, now that this question is settled it is because she is told so by those who ought to know better, and who impose *their* prejudices upon *her* ignorance. Vulgar errors which are taken on trust, or are traditional, or are the blunders of

ignorance on points of learning, have nothing to do with common sense, which decides only on facts and feelings which have come under its own notice. Common sense and *common place* are also the antipodes of each other: the one is a collection of true experiences, the other a routine of cant phrases.

All affectation is the death of common sense, which requires the utmost simplicity and sincerity. Liars must be without common sense, for instead of considering what things really are, their whole time and attention are taken up in imposing false appearances on themselves and their neighbours. No conceited person can have the faculty we have been speaking of, since all objects are tinged and changed from their proper hue by the idle reflection of their fancied excellence and superiority. Great talkers are in the same predicament, for they sacrifice truth to a fine speech or sentiment, and conceal the real consequences of things from their view by a cloud of words, of empty breath. They look at nature not to study what it is, but to discover what they can say about it. Passionate people are generally thought to be devoid of judgment. They may be so, when their passions are touched to the quick; but without a certain degree of natural irritability, we do not conceive truth leaves sufficient stings in the mind, and we judge correctly of things according to the interest we take in them. No one can be a physiognomist, for example, or have an insight into character and expression, without the correspondent germs of these in his own breast. Phlegmatic C——, with all his husbandry acquirements, is but half a philosopher, half a clown.

Poets, if they have not common sense, can do very well without it. What need have they to conform their ideas to the actual world, when they can create a world according to their fancy?

We know of no remedy for want of tact and insight into human affairs, any more than for the defect of any other organ. *Tom Jones* is, we think, the best horn-book for students in this way; and if the novice should rise up no wiser from its repeated perusal, at least such an employ-

ment of his time will be better than playing the fool or talking nonsense. After all, the most absurd characters are those who are so, not from a want of common sense, but who act in defiance of their better knowledge. The capricious and fickle who change every moment, the perverse who aim only at what is placed out of their reach, the obstinate who pursue a losing cause, the idle and vicious who ruin themselves and everyone connected with them, do it as often with their eyes open as from blind infatuation; and it is the bias of their wills, not the deficiency of their understandings, that is in fault.

The greatest fools in practice are sometimes the wisest men in theory, for they have all the advantage of their own experience and self-reflection to prompt them; and they can give the best advice to others, though they do not conceive themselves bound to follow it in their own instance. *Video meliora proboque*, etc. Their judgments may be clear and just, but their habits and affections lie all the wrong way; and it is as useless as it would be cruel to expect them to reform, since they only delight and can only exist in their darling absurdities and daily and hourly *escapades* from common sense and reason.

ON READING OLD BOOKS.

I hate to read new books. There are twenty or thirty volumes that I have read over and over again, and these are the only ones that I have any desire ever to read at all. It was a long time before I could bring myself to sit down to the Tales of My Landlord, but now that author's works have made a considerable addition to my scanty library. I am told that some of Lady Morgan's are good, and have been recommended to look into Anastasius ; but I have not yet ventured upon that task.

A lady, the other day, could not refrain from expressing her surprise to a friend, who said he had been reading Delphine :—she asked,—If it had not been published some time back ? Women judge of books as they do of fashions or complexions, which are admired only "in their newest gloss." That is not my way. I am not one of those who trouble the circulating libraries much, or pester the booksellers for mail-coach copies of standard periodical publications. I cannot say that I am greatly addicted to black-letter, but I profess myself well versed in the marble bindings of Andrew Millar, in the middle of the last century ; nor does my taste revolt at Thurloe's State Papers, in Russia leather ; or an ample impression of Sir William Temple's Essays, with a portrait after Sir Godfrey Kneller in front.

I do not think altogether the worse of a book for having survived the author a generation or two. I have more confidence in the dead than the living. Contemporary writers may generally be divided into two classes—one's friends or one's foes. Of the first we are compelled to think too well, and of the last we are disposed to think too ill, to receive much genuine pleasure from the persual, or to

judge fairly of the merits of either. One candidate for literary fame, who happens to be of our acquaintance, writes finely, and like a man of genius; but unfortunately has a foolish face, which spoils a delicate passage :—another inspires us with the highest respect for his personal talents and character, but does not quite come up to our expectations in print. All these contradictions and petty details interrupt the calm current of our reflections. If you want to know what any of the authors were who lived before our time, and are still objects of anxious inquiry, you have only to look into their works. But the dust and smoke and noise of modern literature have nothing in common with the pure, silent air of immortality.

When I take up a work that I have read before (the oftener the better) I know what I have to expect. The satisfaction is not lessened by being anticipated. When the entertainment is altogether new, I sit down to it as I should to a strange dish,—turn and pick out a bit here and there, and am in doubt what to think of the composition. There is a want of confidence and security to second appetite. New-fangled books are also like made-dishes in this respect, that they are generally little else than hashes and *rifaccimentos* of what has been served up entire and in a more natural state at other times.

Besides, in thus turning to a well-known author, there is not only an assurance that my time will not be thrown away, or my palate nauseated with the most insipid or vilest trash,—but I shake hands with, and look an old, tried, and valued friend in the face,—compare notes, and chat the hours away. It is true, we form dear friendships with such ideal guests—dearer, alas! and more lasting, than those with our most intimate acquaintance. In reading a book which is an old favourite with me (say the first novel I ever read) I not only have the pleasure of imagination and of a critical relish of the work, but the pleasures of memory added to it. It recalls the same feelings and associations which I had in first reading it, and which I can never have again in any other way.

Standard productions of this kind are links in the chain

of our conscious being. They bind together the different scattered divisions of our personal identity. They are landmarks and guides in our journey through life. They are pegs and loops on which we can hang up, or from which we can take down, at pleasure, the wardrobe of a moral imagination, the relics of our best affections, the tokens and records of our happiest hours. They are "for thoughts and for remembrance!" They are like Fortunatus's Wishing-Cap—they give us the best riches—those of Fancy; and transport us, not over half the globe, but (which is better) over half our lives, at a word's notice!

My father Shandy solaced himself with Bruscambille. Give me for this purpose a volume of Peregrine Pickle or Tom Jones. Open either of them any where—at the Memoirs of Lady Vane, or the adventures at the masquerade with Lady Bellaston, or the disputes between Thwackum and Square, or the escape of Molly Seagrim, or the incident of Sophia and her muff, or the edifying prolixity of her aunt's lecture—and there I find the same delightful, busy, bustling scene as ever, and feel myself the same as when I was first introduced into the midst of it. Nay, sometimes the sight of an odd volume of these good old English authors on a stall, or the name lettered on the back among others on the shelves of a library, answers the purpose, revives the whole train of ideas, and sets "the puppets dallying." Twenty years are struck off the list, and I am a child again.

A sage philosopher, who was not a very wise man, said, that he should like very well to be young again, if he could take his experience along with him. This ingenious person did not seem to be aware, by the gravity of his remark, that the great advantage of being young is to be without this weight of experience, which he would fain place upon the shoulders of youth, and which never comes too late with years. Oh! what a privilege to be able to let this hump, like Christian's burthen, drop from off one's back, and transport one's self, by the help of a little musty duodecimo, to the time when "ignorance was bliss," and when we first got a peep at the raree-show of the world,

through the glass of fiction—gazing at mankind, as we do at wild beasts in a menagerie, through the bars of their cages,—or at curiosities in a museum, that we must not touch !

For myself, not only are the old ideas of the contents of the work brought back to my mind in all their vividness, but the old associations of the faces and persons of those I then knew, as they were in their life-time—the place where I sat to read the volume, the day when I got it, the feeling of the air, the fields, the sky—return, and all my early impressions with them. This is better to me—those places, those times, those persons, and those feelings that come across me as I retrace the story and devour the page, are to me better far than the wet sheets of the last new novel from the Ballantyne press, to say nothing of the Minerva press in Leadenhall-street. It is like visiting the scenes of early youth. I think of the time "when I was in my father's house, and my path ran down with butter and honey,"—when I was a little, thoughtless child, and had no other wish or care but to con my daily task, and be happy !

Tom Jones, I remember, was the first work that broke the spell. It came down in numbers once a fortnight, in Cooke's pocket-edition, embellished with cuts. I had hitherto read only in school-books, and a tiresome ecclesiastical history (with the exception of Mrs. Radcliffe's Romance of the Forest) : but this had a different relish with it,—"sweet in the mouth," though not "bitter in the belly." It smacked of the world I lived in, and in which I was to live—and shewed me groups, "gay creatures" not "of the element," but of the earth ; not "living in the clouds," but travelling the same road that I did ;—some that had passed on before me, and others that might soon overtake me.

My heart had palpitated at the thoughts of a boarding-school ball, or gala-day at Midsummer or Christmas : but the world I had found out in Cooke's edition of the British Novelists was to me a dance through life, a perpetual gala-day. The sixpenny numbers of this work regularly con-

trived to leave off just in the middle of a sentence, and in the nick of a story, where Tom Jones discovers Square behind the blanket; or where Parson Adams, in the inextricable confusion of events, very undesignedly gets to bed to Mrs. Slip-slop.

Let me caution the reader against this impression of Joseph Andrews; for there is a picture of Fanny in it which he should not set his heart on, lest he should never meet with any thing like it; or if he should, it would, perhaps, be better for him that he had not. It was just like —— ——! With what eagerness I used to look forward to the next number, and open the prints! Ah! never again shall I feel the enthusiastic delight with which I gazed at the figures, and anticipated the story and adventures of Major Bath and Commodore Trunnion, of Trim and my Uncle Toby, of Don Quixote and Sancho and Dapple, of Gil Blas and Dame Lorenza Sephora, of Laura and the fair Lucretia, whose lips open and shut like buds of roses. To what nameless ideas did they give rise,—with what airy delights I filled up the outlines, as I hung in silence over the page!—Let me still recal them, that they may breathe fresh life into me, and that I may live that birthday of thought and romantic pleasure over again!

Talk of the *ideal*! This is the only true ideal—the heavenly tints of Fancy reflected in the bubbles that float upon the spring-tide of human life.

> "Oh! Memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,
> And give those scenes thine everlasting life!"

The paradox with which I set out is, I hope, less startling than it was; the reader will, by this time, have been let into my secret. Much about the same time, or I believe rather earlier, I took a particular satisfaction in reading Chubb's Tracts, and I often think I will get them again to wade through. There is a high gusto of polemical divinity in them; and you fancy that you hear a club of shoemakers at Salisbury, debating a disputable text from one of St. Paul's Epistles in a workmanlike style, with equal shrewdness and pertinacity.

I cannot say much for my metaphysical studies, into which I launched shortly after with great ardour, so as to make a toil of a pleasure. I was presently entangled in the briars and thorns of subtle distinctions,—of "fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute," though I cannot add that "in their wandering mazes I found no end"; for I did arrive at some very satisfactory and potent conclusions; nor will I go so far, however ungrateful the subject might seem, as to exclaim with Marlowe's Faustus—"Would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book"—that is, never studied such authors as Hartley, Hume, Berkeley, &c. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding is, however, a work from which I never derived either pleasure or profit; and Hobbes, dry and powerful as he is, I did not read till long afterwards.

I read a few poets, which did not much hit my taste,—for I would have the reader understand, I am deficient in the faculty of imagination; but I fell early upon French romances and philosophy, and devoured them tooth-and-nail. Many a dainty repast have I made of the New Eloise;—the description of the kiss; the excursion on the water; the letter of St. Preux, recalling the time of their first loves; and the account of Julia's death; these I read over and over again with unspeakable delight and wonder. Some years after, when I met with this work again, I found I had lost nearly my whole relish for it (except some few parts) and was, I remember, very much mortified with the change in my taste, which I sought to attribute to the smallness and gilt edges of the edition I had bought, and its being perfumed with rose-leaves.

Nothing could exceed the gravity, the solemnity with which I carried home and read the Dedication to the Social Contract, with some other pieces of the same author, which I had picked up at a stall in a coarse leathern cover. Of the Confessions I have spoken elsewhere, and may repeat what I have said—"Sweet is the dew of their memory, and pleasant the balm of their recollection!" Their beauties are not "scattered like stray-gifts o'er the earth," but sown thick on the page, rich and rare. I wish I had never read

the Emilius, or read it with less implicit faith. I had no occasion to pamper my natural aversion to affectation or pretence, by romantic and artificial means. I had better have formed myself on the model of Sir Fopling Flutter.

There is a class of persons whose virtues and most shining qualities sink in, and are concealed by, an absorbent ground of modesty and reserve; and such a one I do, without vanity, profess myself*. Now these are the very persons who are likely to attach themselves to the character of Emilius, and of whom it is sure to be the bane. This dull, phlegmatic, retiring humour is not in a fair way to be corrected, but confirmed and rendered desperate, by being in that work held up as an object of imitation, as an example of simplicity and magnanimity—by coming upon us with all the recommendations of novelty, surprise, and superiority to the prejudices of the world—by being stuck upon a pedestal, made amiable, dazzling, a *leurre de dupe*! The reliance on solid worth which it inculcates, the preference of sober truth to gaudy tinsel, hangs like a mill-stone round the neck of the imagination—"a load to sink a navy"—impedes our progress, and blocks up every prospect in life.

A man, to get on, to be successful, conspicuous, applauded, should not retire upon the centre of his conscious resources, but be always at the circumference of appearances. He must envelop himself in a halo of mystery—he must ride in an equipage of opinion—he must walk with a train of self-conceit following him—he must not strip himself to a buff-jerkin, to the doublet and hose of his real merits, but must surround himself with a *cortège* of prejudices, like the signs of the Zodiac—he must seem any thing but what he is, and then he may pass for any thing he pleases. The world love to be amused by hollow professions, to be deceived by flattering appearances, to live in a state of hallucina-

* Nearly the same sentiment was wittily and happily expressed by a friend, who had some lottery puffs, which he had been employed to write, returned on his hands for their too great severity of thought and classical terseness of style, and who observed on that occasion, that "Modest merit never can succeed!"

tion ; and can forgive every thing but the plain, downright, simple honest truth—such as we see it chalked out in the character of Emilius.—To return from this digression, which is a little out of place here.

Books have in a great measure lost their power over me ; nor can I revive the same interest in them as formerly. I perceive when a thing is good, rather than feel it. It is true,

"Marcian Colonna is a dainty book ;"

and the reading of Mr. Keats's Eve of Saint Agnes lately made me regret that I was not young again. The beautiful and tender images there conjured up, " come like shadows—so depart." The " tiger-moth's wings," which he has spread over his rich poetic blazonry, just flit across my fancy ; the gorgeous twilight window which he has painted over again in his verse, to me " blushes " almost in vain " with blood of queens and kings." I know how I should have felt at one time in reading such passages ; and that is all. The sharp luscious flavour, the fine *aroma* is fled, and nothing but the stalk, the bran, the husk of literature is left.

If any one were to ask me what I read now, I might answer with my Lord Hamlet in the play—" Words, words, words."—" What is the matter ? "—*Nothing* !—They have scarce a meaning. But it was not always so. There was a time when to my thinking, every word was a flower or a pearl, like those which dropped from the mouth of the little peasant-girl in the Fairy tale, or like those that fall from the great preacher in the Caledonian Chapel ! I drank of the stream of knowledge that tempted, but did not mock my lips, as of the river of life, freely. How eagerly I slaked my thirst of German sentiment, " as the hart that panteth for the water-springs " ; how I bathed and revelled, and added my floods of tears to Goethe's Sorrows of Werter, and to Schiller's Robbers—

"Giving my stock of more to that which had too much !"

I read, and assented with all my soul to Coleridge's fine Sonnet, beginning—

"Schiller! that hour I would have wish'd to die,
If through the shuddering midnight I had sent,
From the dark dungeon of the tow'r time-rent,
That fearful voice, a famish'd father's cry!"

I believe I may date my insight into the mysteries of poetry from the commencement of my acquaintance with the authors of the Lyrical Ballads; at least, my discrimination of the higher sorts—not my predilection for such writers as Goldsmith or Pope: nor do I imagine they will say I got my liking for the Novelists, or the comic writers, —for the characters of Valentine, Tattle, or Miss Prue, from them. If so, I must have got from them what they never had themselves. In points where poetic diction and conception are concerned, I may be at a loss, and liable to be imposed upon: but in forming an estimate of passages relating to common life and manners, I cannot think I am a plagiarist from any man. I there "know my cue without a prompter." I may say of such studies—*Intus et in cute.* I am just able to admire those literal touches of observation and description, which persons of loftier pretensions overlook and despise.

I think I comprehend something of the characteristic part of Shakspeare; and in him indeed, all his characteristic, even the nonsense and poetry. I believe it was the celebrated Sir Humphrey Davy who used to say, that Shakespeare was rather a metaphysician than a poet. At any rate, it was not ill said. I wish that I had sooner known the dramatic writers contemporary with Shakspeare; for in looking them over about a year ago, I almost revived my old passion for reading, and my old delight in books, though they were very nearly new to me.

The Periodical Essayists I read long ago. The Spectator I liked extremely: but the Tatler took my fancy most. I read the others soon after, the Rambler, the Adventurer, the World, the Connoisseur: I was not sorry to get to the end of them, and have no desire to go regularly through them again.

I consider myself a thorough adept in Richardson. I like the longest of his novels best, and think no part of them

tedious; nor should I ask to have any thing better to do than to read them from beginning to end, to take them up when I chose, and lay them down when I was tired, in some old family mansion in the country, till every word and syllable relating to the bright Clarissa, the divine Clementina, the beautiful Pamela, "with every trick and line of their sweet favour," were once more "graven in my heart's table*." I have a sneaking kindness for Mackenzie's Julia de Roubigné—for the deserted mansion, and straggling gilli-flowers on the mouldering garden-wall; and still more for his Man of Feeling; not that it is better, nor so good; but at the time I read it, I sometimes thought of the heroine, Miss Walton, and of Miss —— together, and "that ligament, fine as it was, was never broken!"

One of the poets that I have always read with most pleasure, and can wander about in for ever with a sort of voluptuous indolence, is Spenser; and I like Chaucer even better. The only writer among the Italians I can pretend to any knowledge of, is Boccaccio, and of him I cannot express half my admiration. His story of the Hawk I could read and think of from day to day, just as I would look at a picture of Titian's!

I remember, as long ago as the year 1798, going to a neighbouring town (Shrewsbury, where Farquhar has laid the plot of his Recruiting Officer) and bringing home with me, "at one proud swoop," a copy of Milton's Paradise Lost, and another of Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution—both which I have still; and I still recollect, when I see the covers, the pleasure with which I dipped into them as I returned with my double prize. I was set

* During the peace of Amiens, a young English officer, of the name of Lovelace, was presented at Buonaparte's levee. Instead of the usual question, "Where have you served, Sir?" the First Consul immediately addressed him, "I perceive your name, Sir, is the same as that of the hero of Richardson's Romance!" Here was a Consul. The young man's uncle, who was called Lovelace, told me this anecdote while we were stopping together at Calais. I had also been thinking that his was the same name as that of the hero of Richardson's Romance. This is one of my reasons for liking Buonaparte.

up for one while. That time is past "with all its giddy raptures": but I am still anxious to preserve its memory, "embalmed with odours."

With respect to the first of these works, I would be permitted to remark here in passing, that it is sufficient answer to the German criticism which has since been started against the character of Satan (*viz.* that it is not one of disgusting deformity, or pure, defecated malice) to say that Milton has there drawn, not the abstract principle of evil, not a devil incarnate, but a fallen angel. This is the scriptural account, and the poet has followed it. We may safely retain such passages as that well-known one—

> "——His form had not yet lost
> All her original brightness; nor appear'd
> Less than archangel ruin'd; and the excess
> Of glory obscur'd—— "

for the theory which is opposed to them, "falls flat upon the grunsel edge, and shames its worshippers." Let us hear no more then of this monkish cant, and bigotted outcry for the restoration of the horns and tail of the devil!

Again, as to the other work, Burke's Reflections, I took a particular pride and pleasure in it, and read it to myself and others for months afterwards. I had reason for my prejudice in favour of this author. To understand an adversary is some praise: to admire him is more. I thought I did both: I knew I did one.

From the first time I ever cast my eyes on any thing of Burke's (which was an extract from his Letter to a Noble Lord in a three-times a week paper, the St. James's Chronicle, in 1796), I said to myself, "This is true eloquence: this is a man pouring out his mind on paper." All other style seemed to me pedantic and impertinent. Dr. Johnson's was walking on stilts; and even Junius's (who was at that time a favourite with me) with all his terseness, shrunk up into little antithetic points and well-trimmed sentences. But Burke's style was forked and playful as the lightning, crested like the serpent. He delivered plain things on a plain ground; but when he rose, there was no end of his flights and circumgyrations—and in this very Letter, "he,

like an eagle in a dove-cot, fluttered *his* Volscians' (the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale)* " in Corioli."

I did not care for his doctrines. I was then, and am still, proof against their contagion ; but I admired the author, and was considered as not a very staunch partisan of the opposite side, though I thought myself that an abstract proposition was one thing—a masterly transition, a brilliant metaphor, another. I conceived too that he might be wrong in his main argument, and yet deliver fifty truths in arriving at a false conclusion. I remember Coleridge assuring me, as a poetical and political set-off to my sceptical admiration, that Wordsworth had written an Essay on Marriage, which, for manly thought and nervous expression, he deemed incomparably superior. As I had not, at that time, seen any specimens of Mr. Wordsworth's prose style, I could not express my doubts on the subject.

If there are greater prose-writers than Burke, they either lie out of my course of study, or are beyond my sphere of comprehension. I am too old to be a convert to a new mythology of genius. The niches are occupied, the tables are full. If such is still my admiration of this man's misapplied powers, what must it have been at a time when I myself was in vain trying, year after year, to write a single Essay, nay, a single page or sentence ; when I regarded the wonders of his pen with the longing eyes of one who was dumb and a changeling ; and when, to be able to convey the slightest conception of my meaning to others in words, was the height of an almost hopeless ambition ! But I never measured others' excellences by my own defects : though a sense of my own incapacity, and of the steep, impassable ascent from me to them, made me regard them with greater awe and fondness.

I have thus run through most of my early studies and favourite authors, some of whom I have since criticised more at large. Whether those observations will survive me, I neither know nor do I much care : but to the works them-

* He is there called "Citizen Lauderdale." Is this the present Earl ?

selves, "worthy of all acceptation," and to the feelings they have always excited in me since I could distinguish a meaning in language, nothing shall ever prevent me from looking back with gratitude and triumph. To have lived in the cultivation of an intimacy with such works, and to have familiarly relished such names, is not to have lived quite in vain.

There are other authors whom I have never read, and yet whom I have frequently had a great desire to read, from some circumstance relating to them. Among these is Lord Clarendon's History of the Grand Rebellion, after which I have a hankering, from hearing it spoken of by good judges —from my interest in the events, and knowledge of the characters from other sources, and from having seen fine portraits of most of them. I like to read a well-penned character, and Clarendon is said to have been a master in this way.

I should like to read Froissart's Chronicles, Hollingshed and Stowe, and Fuller's Worthies. I intend, whenever I can, to read Beaumont and Fletcher all through. There are fifty-two of their plays, and I have only read a dozen or fourteen of them. A Wife for a Month, and Thierry and Theodoret, are, I am told, delicious, and I can believe it. I should like to read the speeches in Thucydides, and Guicciardini's History of Florence, and Don Quixote in the original. I have often thought of reading the Loves of Persiles and Sigismunda, and the Galatea of the same author. But I somehow reserve them like "another Yarrow." I should also like to read the last new novel (if I could be sure it was so) of the author of Waverley :— no one would be more glad than I to find it the best !

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS.

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W——m in Shropshire; and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the "dreaded name of Demogorgon") Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian Congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers.

Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there, "fluttering the *proud Salopians* like an eagle in a dove-cote"; and the Welch mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

"High-born Hoel's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay!"

As we passed along between W——m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the road-

side, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now, bursting from the deadly bands that bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years.

My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr. Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighbourhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the meantime I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear

this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. *Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dusse-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaître pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.* When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE."

As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the last two words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind.

The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state—not their alliance, but their separation—on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made a poetical and pastoral excursion,—and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, "as though he should never be old," and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

"Such were the notes our once-lov'd poet sung."

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I

had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together. Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes.

I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned everything into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of JUS DIVINUM on it:

"Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe."

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. "For those two hours," he afterwards was pleased to say, "he was conversing with W. H.'s forehead!"

His appearance was different from what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright—

"As are the children of yon azure sheen."

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. "A certain tender bloom his face o'erspread," a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humoured and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing—like what he has done.

It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height

surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, "somewhat fat and pursy." His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven's, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different colour) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappearing, like vapourish bubbles, in the human breast!

After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators,—huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did

he pore on these from morn till night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather broccoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)?

Here were "no figures nor no fantasies,"—neither poetry nor philosophy—nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple; questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things; the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of nondescript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlour, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had

found a new ally in Fancy* ! Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects.

At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft and Mackintosh. The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciae Gallicae* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man—a master of the topics,—or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature : Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to common-places.

On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavour imaginable.

Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them—" He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance ! " Godwin had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success ; Coleridge told him—" If there had been a man of genius

* My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry ; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantry, I have never seen them equalled.

in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He replied, that " this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high* (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-making.

We talked a little about Holcroft. He had been asked if he was not much struck *with* him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck *by* him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, " What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea*? " This, Coleridge said, was barricadoing the road to truth :—it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember ; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury.

When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of 150*l.* a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was hence-

* He complained in particular of the presumption of attempting to establish the future immortality of man " without " (as he said) " knowing what Death was or what Life was "—and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both.

forth to inhabit the Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty.

I was presently relieved from this dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether-Stowey, Somersetshire*; and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in Cassandra) when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road.

It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The Scholar in Chaucer is described as going

"——Sounding on his way."

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the foot-path to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He seemed unable to keep on in a strait line.

He spoke slightingly of Hume (whose Essay on Miracles he said was stolen from an objection started in one of

South's sermons—*Credat Judaeus Apella* !). I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *choke-pears*, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candour.

He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision* as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's Theory of Matter and Spirit, and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge drew a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection) between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine. He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher.

He considered Bishop Butler as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading ; the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias.

I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*)—and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new

pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half-way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labour in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper.

I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places! If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W——m and Shrewsbury*, and immortalise every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed!

I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that "the fact of his work on Moral and Political Philosophy being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character." We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honoured ever with suitable regard."

He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of

ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleian Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's Vision of Judgment, and also from that other Vision of Judgment, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junto, has taken into his especial keeping.

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sunsets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the spring.* This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings.

I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increased my ardour. In the meantime, I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptised in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untired feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read Paul and Virginia. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read !

I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behaviour of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance ? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in Paul and Virginia. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose in his mind ; for whatever *he* added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment.

I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read Camilla. So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy ; but wanting that, have wanted everything !

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of

twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon, Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest.

Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the *Lyrical Ballads*, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*. I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II., and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

"——hear the loud stag speak."

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fulness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been*!

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice, the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted. But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

> "In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,"

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring,

> "While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed."

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

> "Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
> Fix'd fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,"

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to believe in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-fact-ness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the universe like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction.

The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at

Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was more gaunt and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the *costume* of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell. There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants the marking traits ; but he was teazed into making it regular and heavy : Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*, is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression.

He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that " his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre* by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said " it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum* merit was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect.

Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, " How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank ! " I thought within myself, " With what eyes these poets see nature ! " and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me !

We went over to All-Foxden again the day following,

and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air ; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics ! Whatever might be thought of the poem, " his face was as a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied ; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*.

Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copse-wood ; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a straight gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption.

Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighbourhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbour made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole, sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton.

We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He " followed in the chase, like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover,

which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way : yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester.

He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantean philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete ; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so.

We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us : contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march—(our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue)—through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs.

The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths overlooking the Channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*.

At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more

marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull for ever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*.

A thunder-storm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bare-headed to enjoy the commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*, but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlour, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the bee-hives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's Georgics, but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant.

It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a window-seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, "*That* is true fame!" He said Thomson was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted; totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II.

Some comparison was introduced between Shakespear and Milton. He said "he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespear appeared to him a mere stripling in the art;

he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man's estate ; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster." He spoke with contempt of Gray, and with intolerance of Pope. He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that " the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages."

He thought little of Junius as a writer ; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson ; and a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. He liked Richardson, but not Fielding ; nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.* In short, he was profound and discriminating with respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play ; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes.

We loitered on the " ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name ! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said " he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted.

I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the

*He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffamalco and others ; of one in particular, where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time.

mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot, (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest any thing to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton. I asked him if he had prepared anything for the occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him,—this was a fault,—but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of Remorse; which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's and the Drury-lane boards,—

> "Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,
> And give those scenes thine everlasting life."

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out.

It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a common-place book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge,

where they were disputing fiercely which was the best —*Man as he was, or man as he is to be.* "Give me," says Lamb, "man as he is *not* to be." This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues.—Enough of this for the present.

"But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second tale."

ON THE CONVERSATION OF AUTHORS.

I.

An author is bound to write—well or ill, wisely or foolishly : it is his trade. But I do not see that he is bound to talk, any more than he is bound to dance, or ride, or fence better than other people. Reading, study, silence, thought, are a bad introduction to loquacity. It would be sooner learnt of chambermaids and tapsters. He understands the art and mystery of his own profession, which is book-making : what right has any one to expect or require him to do more—to make a bow gracefully on entering or leaving a room, to make love charmingly, or to make a fortune at all? In all things there is a division of labour. A lord is no less amorous for writing ridiculous love-letters, nor a General less successful for wanting wit and honesty. Why then may not a poor author say nothing, and yet pass muster?

Set him on the top of a stage-coach, he will make no figure ; he is *mum-chance*, while the slang-wit flies about as fast as the dust, with the crack of the whip and the clatter of the horses' heels : put him in a ring of boxers, he is a poor creature—

"And of his port as meek as is a maid."

Introduce him to a tea-party of milliner's girls, and they are ready to split their sides with laughing at him : over his bottle, he is dry : in the drawing-room, rude or awkward : he is too refined for the vulgar, too clownish for the fashionable :—" he is one that cannot make a good leg, one that cannot eat a mess of broth cleanly, one that cannot ride a horse without spur-galling, one that cannot salute a

woman, and look on her directly" :—in courts, in camps, in town and country, he is a cypher or a butt : he is good for nothing but a laughing-stock or a scare-crow. You can scarcely get a word out of him for love or money.

He knows nothing. He has no notion of pleasure or business, or of what is going on in the world ; he does not understand cookery (unless he is a doctor in divinity) nor surgery, nor chemistry (unless he is a *Quidnunc*), nor mechanics, nor husbandry and tillage (unless he is as great an admirer of Tull's Husbandry, and has profited as much by it as the philosopher of Botley)—no, nor music, painting, the Drama, nor the Fine Arts in general.

"What the deuce is it then, my good sir, that he does understand, or know anything about?"

"BOOKS, VENUS, BOOKS!"

"What books?"

"Not receipt-books, Madona, nor account-books, nor books of pharmacy, or the veterinary art (they belong to their respective callings and handicrafts) but books of liberal taste and general knowledge."

"What do you mean by that general knowledge which implies not a knowledge of things in general, but an ignorance (by your own account) of every one in particular : or by that liberal taste which scorns the pursuits and acquirements of the rest of the world in succession, and is confined exclusively, and by way of excellence, to what nobody takes an interest in but yourself, and a few idlers like yourself? Is this what the critics mean by the *belles-lettres*, and the study of humanity?"

Book-knowledge, in a word, then, is knowledge *communicable by books* : and it is general and liberal for this reason, that it is intelligible and interesting on the bare suggestion. That to which any one feels a romantic attachment, merely from finding it in a book, must be interesting in itself : that which he instantly forms a lively and entire conception of, from seeing a few marks and scratches upon paper, must be taken from common nature : that which, the first time you meet with it, seizes upon the attention as a curious speculation, must exercise the general faculties of the human

mind. There are certain broader aspects of society and views of things common to every subject, and more or less cognizable to every mind; and these the scholar treats and founds his claim to general attention upon them, without being chargeable with pedantry.

The minute descriptions of fishing-tackle, of baits and flies in Walton's *Complete Angler*, make that work a great favourite with sportsmen: the alloy of an amiable humanity, and the modest but touching descriptions of familiar incidents and rural objects scattered through it, have made it an equal favourite with every reader of taste and feeling. Montaigne's *Essays*, Dilworth's *Spelling Book*, and Fearn's *Treatise on Contingent Remainders*, are all equally books, but not equally adapted for all classes of readers. The two last are of no use but to school-masters and lawyers: but the first is a work we may recommend to any one to read who has ever thought at all, or who would learn to think justly on any subject.

Persons of different trades and professions—the mechanic, the shop-keeper, the medical practitioner, the artist, etc. may all have great knowledge and ingenuity in their several vocations, the details of which will be very edifying to themselves, and just as incomprehensible to their neighbours: but over and above this professional and technical knowledge, they must be supposed to have a stock of common sense and common feeling to furnish subjects for common conversation, or to give them any pleasure in each other's company. It is to this common stock of ideas, spread over the surface, or striking its roots into the very centre of society, that the popular writer appeals, and not in vain; for he finds readers.

It is of this finer essence of wisdom and humanity, "etherial mould, sky-tinctured," that books of the better sort are made. They contain the language of thought. It must happen that, in the course of time and the variety of human capacity, some persons will have struck out finer observations, reflections, and sentiments than others. These they have committed to books of memory, have bequeathed as a lasting legacy to posterity; and such

persons have become standard authors. We visit at the shrine, drink in some measure of the inspiration, and cannot easily "breathe in other air less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits."

Are we to be blamed for this, because the vulgar and illiterate do not always understand us? The fault is rather in them, who are "confined and cabin'd in," each in their own particular sphere and compartment of ideas, and have not the same refined medium of communication or abstracted topics of discourse. Bring a number of literary, or of illiterate persons together, perfect strangers to each other, and see which party will make the best company. "Verily, we have our reward." We have made our election, and have no reason to repent it, if we were wise.

But the misfortune is, we wish to have all the advantages on one side. We grudge, and cannot reconcile it to ourselves, that any one "should go about to cozen fortune, without the stamp of learning!" We think "because we are *scholars*, there shall be no more cakes and ale!" We don't know how to account for it, that bar-maids should gossip, or ladies whisper, or bullies roar, or fools laugh, or knaves thrive, without having gone through the same course of select study that we have! This vanity is preposterous, and carries its own punishment with it.

Books are a world in themselves, it is true; but they are not the only world. The world itself is a volume larger than all the libraries in it. Learning is a sacred deposit from the experience of ages; but it has not put all future experience on the shelf, or debarred the common herd of mankind from the use of their hands, tongues, eyes, ears, or understandings. Taste is a luxury for the privileged few: but it would be hard upon those who have not the same standard of refinement in their own minds that we suppose ourselves to have, if this should prevent them from having recourse, as usual, to their old frolics, coarse jokes, and horse-play, and getting through the wear and tear of the world, with such homely sayings and shrewd helps as they may.

Happy is it, that the mass of mankind eat and drink, and sleep, and perform their several tasks, and do as they like without us—caring nothing for our scribblings, our carpings, and our quibbles; and moving on the same, in spite of our fine-spun distinctions, fantastic theories, and lines of demarcation, which are like the chalk-figures drawn on ball-room floors to be danced out before morning! In the field opposite the window where I write this, there is a country-girl picking stones: in the one next it, there are several poor women weeding the blue and red flowers from the corn: farther on, are two boys, tending a flock of sheep. What do they know or care about what I am writing about them, or ever will—or what would they be the better for it, if they did? Or why need we despise

> "The wretched slave,
> Who like a lackey, from the rise to the set,
> Sweats in the eye of Phoebus, and all night
> Sleeps in Elysium; next day, after dawn,
> Doth rise, and help Hyperion to his horse;
> And follows so the ever-running year
> With profitable labour to his grave"?

Is not this life as sweet as writing Ephemerides? But we put that which flutters the brain idly for a moment, and then is heard no more, in competition with nature, which exists every where, and lasts always. We not only underrate the force of nature, and make too much of art—but we also over-rate our own accomplishments and advantages derived from art. In the presence of clownish ignorance, or of persons without any great pretensions, real or affected, we are very much inclined to take upon ourselves, as the virtual representatives of science, art, and literature. We have a strong itch to show off and do the honours of civilization for all the great men whose works we have ever read, and whose names our auditors have never heard of, as noblemen's lacqueys, in the absence of their masters, give themselves airs of superiority over every one else.

But though we have read Congreve, a stage-coachman may be an over-match for us in wit: though we are deep-versed in the excellence of Shakspeare's colloquial style, a

village beldam may outscold us : though we have read Machiavel in the original Italian, we may be easily outwitted by a clown : and though we have cried our eyes out over the New Eloise, a poor shepherd-lad, who hardly knows how to spell his own name, may " tell his tale under the hawthorn in the dale," and prove a more thriving wooer. What then is the advantage we possess over the meanest of the mean ? Why this, that we have read Congreve, Shakspeare, Machiavel, the *New Eloise* ;—not that we are to have their wit, genius, shrewdness, or melting tenderness.

From speculative pursuits we must be satisfied with speculative benefits. From reading, too, we learn to write. If we have had the pleasure of studying the highest models of perfection in their kind, and can hope to leave any thing ourselves, however slight, to be looked upon as a model, or even a good copy in its way, we may think ourselves pretty well off, without engrossing all the privileges of learning, and all the blessings of ignorance into the bargain.

It has been made a question whether there have not been individuals in common life of greater talents and powers of mind than the most celebrated writers—whether, for instance, such or such a Liverpool merchant, or Manchester manufacturer, was not a more sensible man than Montaigne, of a longer reach of understanding than the Viscount of St. Albans. There is no saying, unless some of these illustrious obscure had communicated their important discoveries to the world. But then they would have been authors !—On the other hand, there is a set of critics who fall into the contrary error ; and suppose that unless the proof of capacity is laid before all the world, the capacity itself cannot exist ; looking upon all those who have not commenced authors, as literally " stocks and stones, and worse than senseless things."

I remember trying to convince a person of this class, that a young lady, whom he knew something of, the niece of a celebrated authoress, had just the same sort of fine *tact* and ironical turn in conversation, that her relative had shown in her writings when young. The only answer I could get was an incredulous smile, and the observation that when

she wrote any thing as good as——, or——, he might think her as clever. I said all I meant was, that she had the same family talents, and asked whether he thought that if Miss——had not been very clever, as a mere girl, before she wrote her novels, she would ever have written them? It was all in vain. He still stuck to his text, and was convinced that the niece was a little fool compared to her aunt at the same age; and if he had known the aunt formerly, he would have had just the same opinion of *her*.

My friend was one of those who have a settled persuasion that it is the book that makes the author, and not the author the book. That's a strange opinion for a great philosopher to hold. But he wilfully shuts his eyes to the germs and indistinct workings of genius, and treats them with supercilious indifference, till they stare him in the face through the press; and then takes cognizance only of the overt acts and published evidence. This is neither a proof of wisdom, nor the way to be wise. It is partly pedantry and prejudice, and partly feebleness of judgment and want of magnanimity. He dare as little commit himself on the character of books, as of individuals, till they are stamped by the public. If you show him any work for his approbation, he asks, "Whose is the superscription?"—He judges of genius by its shadow, reputation—of the metal by the coin.

He is just the reverse of another person whom I know—for, as G——never allows a particle of merit to any one till it is acknowledged by the whole world, C——withholds his tribute of applause from every person, in whom any mortal but himself can descry the least glimpse of understanding. He would be thought to look farther into a millstone than any body else. He would have others see with his eyes, and take their opinions from him on trust, in spite of their senses. The more obscure and defective the indications of merit, the greater his sagacity and candour in being the first to point them out. He looks upon what he nicknames *a man of genius*, but as the breath of his nostrils, and the clay in the potter's hands. If any such inert, unconscious

mass, under the fostering care of the modern Prometheus, is kindled into life,—begins to see, speak, and move, so as to attract the notice of other people,—our jealous patroniser of latent worth in that case throws aside, scorns, and hates his own handy-work ; and deserts his intellectual offspring from the moment they can go alone and shift for themselves. —But to pass on to our more immediate subject.

The conversation of authors is not so good as might be imagined : but, such as it is (and with rare exceptions) it is better than any other. The proof of which is, that, when you are used to it, you cannot put up with any other. That of mixed company becomes utterly intolerable—you cannot sit out a common tea and card party, at least, if they pretend to talk at all. You are obliged in despair to cut all your old acquaintance who are not *au fait* on the prevailing and most smartly contested topics, who are not imbued with the high gusto of criticism and *virtù*. You cannot bear to hear a friend whom you have not seen for many years, tell at how much a yard he sells his laces and tapes, when he means to move into his next house, when he heard last from his relations in the country, whether trade is alive or dead, or whether Mr. Such-a-one gets to look old. This sort of neighbourly gossip will not go down after the high-raised tone of literary conversation. The last may be very absurd, very unsatisfactory, and full of turbulence and heart-burnings ; but it has a zest in it which more ordinary topics of news or family-affairs do not supply.

Neither will the conversation of what we understand by *gentlemen* and men of fashion, do after that of men of letters. It is flat, insipid, stale, and unprofitable, in the comparison. They talk about much the same things, pictures, poetry, politics, plays ; but they do it worse, and at a sort of vapid secondhand. They, in fact, talk out of newspapers and magazines, what *we write there*. They do not feel the same interest in the subjects they affect to handle with an air of fashionable condescension, nor have they the same knowledge of them, if they were ever so much in earnest in displaying it. If it were not for the wine and the dessert, no author in his senses would accept an invitation to a well-

dressed dinner-party, except out of pure good-nature and unwillingness to disoblige by his refusal.

Persons in high life talk almost entirely by rote. There are certain established modes of address, and certain answers to them expected as a matter of course, as a point of etiquette. The studied forms of politeness do not give the greatest possible scope to an exuberance of wit or fancy. The fear of giving offence destroys sincerity, and without sincerity there can be no true enjoyment of society, nor unfettered exertion of intellectual activity.

Those who have been accustomed to live with the great are hardly considered as conversible persons in literary society. They are not to be talked with, any more than puppets or echos. They have no opinions but what will please; and you naturally turn away, as a waste of time and words, from attending a person who just before assented to what you said, and whom you find, the moment after, from something that unexpectedly or perhaps by design drops from him, to be of a totally different way of thinking. This *bush-fighting* is not regarded as fair play among scientific men.

As fashionable conversation is a sacrifice to politeness, so the conversation of low life is nothing but rudeness. They contradict you without giving a reason, or if they do, it is a very bad one—swear, talk loud, repeat the same thing fifty times over, get to calling names, and from words proceed to blows. You cannot make companions of servants, or persons in an inferior station in life. You may talk to them on matters of business, and what they have to do for you (as lords talk to bruisers on subjects of *fancy*, or country-squires to their grooms on horse-racing), but out of that narrow sphere, to any general topic, you cannot lead them; the conversation soon flags, and you go back to the old question, or are obliged to break up the sitting for want of ideas in common.

The conversation of authors is better than that of most professions. It is better than that of lawyers, who talk nothing but *double entendre*—than that of physicians, who talk of the approaching deaths of the College, or the

marriage of some new practitioner with some rich widow—than that of divines, who talk of the last place they dined at—than that of University-men, who make stale puns, repeat the refuse of the London newspapers, and affect an ignorance of Greek and mathematics—it is better than that of players, who talk of nothing but the green-room, and rehearse the scholar, the wit, or the fine gentleman, like a part on the stage—or than that of ladies, who, whatever you talk of, think of nothing, and expect you to think of nothing, but themselves.

It is not easy to keep up a conversation with women in company. It is thought a piece of rudeness to differ from them : it is not quite fair to ask them a reason for what they say. You are afraid of pressing too hard upon them : but where you cannot differ openly and unreservedly, you cannot heartily agree. It is not so in France. There the women talk of things in general, and reason better than the men in this country. They are mistresses of the intellectual foils. They are adepts in all the topics. They know what is to be said for and against all sorts of questions, and are lively and full of mischief into the bargain. They are very subtle. They put you to your trumps immediately. Your logic is more in requisition even than your gallantry. You must argue as well as bow yourself into the good graces of these modern Amazons. What a situation for an Englishman to be placed in ! *

The fault of literary conversation in general is its too great tenaciousness. It fastens upon a subject, and will not let it go. It resembles a battle rather than a skirmish, and makes a toil of a pleasure. Perhaps it does this from necessity, from a consciousness of wanting the more familiar graces, the power to sport and trifle, to touch lightly and adorn agreeably, every view or turn of a question

* The topics of metaphysical argument having got into female society in France, is a proof how much they must have been discussed there generally, and how unfounded the charge is which we bring against them of excessive thoughtlessness and frivolity. The French (taken all together) are a more sensible, reflecting, and better informed people than the English.

en passant, as it arises. Those who have a reputation to lose are too ambitious of shining, to please. "To excel in conversation," said an ingenious man, "one must not be always striving to say good things: to say one good thing, one must say many bad, and more indifferent ones." This desire to shine without the means at hand, often makes men silent:—

"The fear of being silent strikes us dumb."

A writer who has been accustomed to take a connected view of a difficult question, and to work it out gradually in all its bearings, may be very deficient in that quickness and ease, which men of the world, who are in the habit of hearing a variety of opinions, who pick up an observation on one subject, and another on another, and who care about none any farther than the passing away of an idle hour, usually acquire. An author has studied a particular point—he has read, he has inquired, he has thought a great deal upon it: he is not contented to take it up casually in common with others, to throw out a hint, to propose an objection: he will either remain silent, uneasy, and dissatisfied, or he will begin at the beginning and go through with it to the end. He is for taking the whole responsibility upon himself. He would be thought to understand the subject better than others, or indeed would show that nobody else knows any thing about it.

There are always three or four points on which the literary novice at his first outset in life fancies he can enlighten every company, and bear down all opposition: but he is cured of this Quixotic and pugnacious spirit, as he goes more into the world, where he finds that there are other opinions and other pretensions to be adjusted besides his own. When this asperity wears off, and a certain scholastic precocity is mellowed down, the conversation of men of letters becomes both interesting and instructive.

Men of the world have no fixed principles; no groundwork of thought: mere scholars have too much an object, a theory always in view, to which they wrest every thing, and not unfrequently, common sense itself. By mixing

with society, they rub off their hardness of manner, and impracticable, offensive singularity, while they retain a greater depth and coherence of understanding. There is more to be learnt from them than from their books. This was a remark of Rousseau's, and it is a very true one. In the confidence and unreserve of private intercourse, they are more at liberty to say what they think, to put the subject in different and opposite points of view, to illustrate it more briefly and pithily by familiar expressions, by an appeal to individual character and personal knowledge— to bring in the limitation, to obviate misconception, to state difficulties on their own side of the argument, and answer them as well as they can.

This would hardly agree with the prudery, and somewhat ostentatious claims of authorship. Dr. Johnson's conversation in Boswell's *Life* is much better than his published works : and the fragments of the opinions of celebrated men, preserved in their letters or in anecdotes of them, are justly sought after as invaluable for the same reason. For instance, what a fund of sense there is in Grimm's *Memoirs* ! We thus get at the essence of what is contained in their more laboured productions, without the affectation or formality.

Argument, again, is the death of conversation, if carried on in a spirit of hostility : but discussion is a pleasant and profitable thing, where you advance and defend your opinions as far as you can, and admit the truth of what is objected against them with equal impartiality ; in short, where you do not pretend to set up for an oracle, but freely declare what you really know about any question, or suggest what has struck you as throwing a new light upon it, and let it pass for what it is worth. This tone of conversation was well described by Dr. Johnson, when he said of some party at which he had been present the night before—" We had good talk, sir ! "

As a general rule, there is no conversation worth any thing but between friends, or those who agree in the same leading views of a subject. Nothing was ever learnt by either side in a dispute. You contradict one another, will

not allow a grain of sense in what your adversary advances, are blind to whatever makes against yourself, dare not look the question fairly in the face, so that you cannot avail yourself even of your real advantages, insist most on what you feel to be the weakest points of your arguments and get more and more absurd, dogmatical, and violent every moment. Disputes for victory generally end to the dissatisfaction of all parties; and the one recorded in *Gil Blas* breaks up just as it ought.

I once knew a very ingenious man, than whom, to take him in the way of common chit-chat or fireside gossip, no one could be more entertaining or rational. He would make an apt classical quotation, propose an explanation of a curious passage in Shakspeare's *Venus and Adonis*, detect a metaphysical error in Locke, would infer the volatility of the French character from the chapter in Sterne where the Count mistakes the feigned name of Yorick for a proof of his being the identical imaginary character in Hamlet (*Et vous êtes Yorick*!)—thus confounding words with things twice over—but let a difference of opinion be once hitched in, and it was all over with him.

His only object from that time was to shut out common sense, and to be proof against conviction. He would argue the most ridiculous point (such as that there were two original languages) for hours together, nay, through the horologe. You would not suppose it was the same person. He was like an obstinate run-away horse, that takes the bit in his mouth, and becomes mischievous and unmanageable. He had made up his mind to one thing, not to admit a single particle of what any one else said for or against him. It was all the difference between a man drunk or sober, sane or mad.

It is the same when he once gets the pen in his hand. He has been trying to prove a contradiction in terms for the ten last years of his life, *viz.* that the Bourbons have the same right to the throne of France that the Brunswick family have to the throne of England. Many people think there is a want of honesty or a want of understanding in

this. There is neither. But he will persist in an argument to the last pinch ; he will yield, in absurdity, to no man !

This litigious humour is bad enough : but there is one character still worse, that of a person who goes into company, not to contradict, but to *talk at* you. This is the greatest nuisance in civilised society. Such a person does not come armed to defend himself at all points, but to unsettle, if he can, and throw a slur on all your favourite opinions. If he has a notion that any one in the room is fond of poetry, he immediately volunteers a contemptuous tirade against the idle jingle of verse. If he suspects you have a delight in pictures, he endeavours, not by fair argument, but by a side-wind, to put you out of conceit with so frivolous an art. If you have a taste for music, he does not think much good is to be done by this tickling of the ears. If you speak in praise of a comedy, he does not see the use of wit : if you say you have been to a tragedy, he shakes his head at this mockery of human misery, and thinks it ought to be prohibited.

He tries to find out beforehand whatever it is that you take a particular pride or pleasure in, that he may annoy your self-love in the tenderest point (as if he were probing a wound) and make you dissatisfied with yourself and your pursuits for several days afterwards. A person might as well make a practice of throwing out scandalous aspersions against your dearest friends or nearest relations, by way of ingratiating himself into your favour. Such ill-timed impertinence is " villainous, and shews a pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it."

The soul of conversation is sympathy.—Authors should converse chiefly with authors, and their talk should be of books. " When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." There is nothing so pedantic as pretending not to be pedantic. No man can get above his pursuit in life : it is getting above himself, which is impossible. There is a Free-masonry in all things. You can only speak to be understood, but this you cannot be, except by those who are in the secret. Hence an argument has been drawn to supersede the necessity of conversation altogether ; for it

has been said, that there is no use in talking to people of sense, who know all that you can tell them, nor to fools, who will not be instructed. There is, however, the smallest encouragement to proceed, when you are conscious that the more you really enter into a subject, the farther you will be from the comprehension of your hearers—and that the more proofs you give of any position, the more odd and out-of-the-way they will think your notions.

C——is the only person who can talk to all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, without caring a farthing for their understanding one word he says—and *he* talks only for admiration and to be listened to, and accordingly the least interruption puts him out. I firmly believe he would make just the same impression on half his audiences, if he purposely repeated absolute nonsense with the same voice and manner and inexhaustible flow of undulating speech!

In general, wit shines only by reflection. You must take your cue from your company—must rise as they rise, and sink as they fall. You must see that your good things, your knowing allusions, are not flung away, like the pearls in the adage. What a check it is to be asked a foolish question; to find that the first principles are not understood! You are thrown on your back immediately, the conversation is stopped like a country-dance by those who do not know the figure. But when a set of adepts, of *illuminati*, get about a question, it is worth while to hear them talk. They may snarl and quarrel over it, like dogs; but they pick it bare to the bone, they masticate it thoroughly.

ON THE CONVERSATION OF AUTHORS.

II.

This was the case formerly at L——'s—where we used to have many lively skirmishes at their Thursday evening parties. I doubt whether the Small-coal man's musical parties could exceed them. Oh! for the pen of John Buncle to consecrate a *petit souvenir* to their memory!— There was L—— himself, the most delightful, the most provoking, the most witty and sensible of men. He always made the best pun, and the best remark in the course of the evening. His serious conversation, like his serious writing, is his best. No one ever stammered out such fine, piquant, deep, eloquent things in half a dozen half sentences as he does. His jests scald like tears: and he probes a qûestion with a play upon words. What a keen, laughing, hair-brained vein of home-felt truth! What choice venom!

How often did we cut into the haunch of letters, while we discussed the haunch of mutton on the table! How we skimmed the cream of criticism! How we got into the heart of controversy! How we picked out the marrow of authors! "And, in our flowing cups, many a good name and true was freshly remembered." Recollect (most sage and critical reader) that in all this I was but a guest! Need I go over the names? They were but the old everlasting set—Milton and Shakspeare, Pope and Dryden, Steele and Addison, Swift and Gay, Fielding, Smollet, Sterne, Richardson, Hogarth's prints, Claude's landscapes, the Cartoons at Hampton-court, and all those things, that, having once been, must ever be.

The Scotch Novels had not then been heard of: so we said nothing about them. In general, we were hard upon the moderns. The author of the *Rambler* was only tolerated in Boswell's *Life* of him; and it was as much as any one could do to edge in a word for Junius. L—— could not bear *Gil Blas*. This was a fault. I remember the greatest triumph I ever had was in persuading him, after some years' difficulty, that Fielding was better than Smollet.

On one occasion, he was for making out a list of persons famous in history that one would wish to see again—at the head of whom were Pontius Pilate, Sir Thomas Browne, and Dr. Faustus—but we black-balled most of his list! But with what a gusto would he describe his favourite authors, Donne, or Sir Philip Sidney, and call their most crabbed passages *delicious*! He tried them on his palate as epicures taste olives, and his observations had a smack in them, like a roughness on the tongue. With what discrimination he hinted a defect in what he admired most—as in saying that the display of the sumptuous banquet in *Paradise Regained* was not in true keeping, as the simplest fare was all that was necessary to tempt the extremity of hunger—and stating that Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost* were too much like married people. He has furnished many a text for C—— to preach upon. There was no fuss or cant about him: nor were his sweets or his sours ever diluted with one particle of affectation.

I cannot say that the party at L——'s were all of one description. There were honorary members, lay-brothers. Wit and good fellowship was the motto inscribed over the door. When a stranger came in, it was not asked, "Has he written any thing?"—we were above that pedantry; but we waited to see what he could do. If he could take a hand at piquet, he was welcome to sit down. If a person liked any thing, if he took snuff heartily, it was sufficient. He would understand, by analogy, the pungency of other things, besides Irish blackguard, or Scotch rappee. A character was good any where, in a room or on paper. But we abhorred insipidity, affectation, and fine gentlemen.

There was one of our party who never failed to mark

" two for his Nob " at cribbage, and he was thought no mean person. This was Ned P——, and a better fellow in his way breathes not. There was ——, who asserted some incredible matter of fact as a likely paradox, and settled all controversies by an *ipse dixit*, a *fiat* of his will, hammering out many a hard theory on the anvil of his brain—the Baron Munchausen of politics and practical philosophy :—there was Captain ——, who had you at an advantage by never understanding you :—there was Jem White, the author of *Falstaff's Letters*, who the other day left this dull world to go in search of more kindred spirits, " turning like the latter end of a lover's lute" :—there was A——, who sometimes dropped in, the Will Honeycomb of our set—and Mrs. R——, who being of a quiet turn, loved to hear a noisy debate.

An utterly uninformed person might have supposed this a scene of vulgar confusion and uproar. While the most critical question was pending, while the most difficult problem in philosophy was solving, P—— cried out, " That's game," and M. B. muttered a quotation over the last remains of a veal-pie at a side-table.

Once, and once only, the literary interest overcame the general. For C—— was riding the high German horse, and demonstrating the Categories of the Transcendental philosophy to the author of the *Road to Ruin* ; who insisted on his knowledge of German, and German metaphysics, having read the *Critique of Pure Reason* in the original. " My dear Mr. Holcroft," said C——, in a tone of infinitely provoking conciliation, " you really put me in mind of a sweet pretty German girl, about fifteen, that I met with in the Hartz forest in Germany—and who one day, as I was reading the Limits of the Knowable and the Unknowable, the profoundest of all his works, with great attention, came behind my chair, and leaning over, said, What, *you* read Kant ? Why, *I* that am German born, don't understand him ! "

This was too much to bear, and Holcroft, starting up, called out in no measured tone, " Mr. C——, you are the most eloquent man I ever met with, and the most trouble-

some with your eloquence!" P—— held the cribbage-peg that was to mark him game, suspended in his hand; and the whist table was silent for a moment. I saw Holcroft down stairs, and, on coming to the landing-place in Mitre-court, he stopped me to observe, that "he thought Mr. C—— a very clever man, with a great command of language, but that he feared he did not always affix very precise ideas to the words he used." After he was gone, we had our laugh out, and went on with the argument on the nature of Reason, the Imagination, and the Will. I wish I could find a publisher for it: it would make a supplement to the *Biographia Literaria* in a volume and a half octavo.

Those days are over! An event, the name of which I wish never to mention, broke up our party, like a bomb-shell thrown into the room: and now we seldom meet—

"Like angels' visits, short and far between."

There is no longer the same set of persons, nor of associations. L—— does not live where he did. By shifting his abode, his notions seem less fixed. He does not wear his old snuff-coloured coat and breeches. It looks like an alteration in his style. An author and a wit should have a separate costume, a particular cloth: he should present something positive and singular to the mind, like Mr. Douce of the Museum. Our faith in the religion of letters will not bear to be taken to pieces, and put together again by caprice or accident.

L. H—— goes there sometimes. He has a fine vinous spirit about him, and tropical blood in his veins: but he is better at his own table. He has a great flow of pleasantry and delightful animal spirits: but his hits do not tell like L——'s; you cannot repeat them the next day. He requires not only to be appreciated, but to have a select circle of admirers and devotees, to feel himself quite at home. He sits at the head of a party with great gaiety and grace; has an elegant manner and turn of features; is never at a loss—*aliquando sufflaminandus erat*—has continual sportive sallies of wit or fancy; tells a story capitally; mimics an

actor, or an acquaintance to admiration ; laughs with great glee and good humour at his own or other people's jokes ; understands the point of an equivoque, or an observation immediately ; has a taste and knowledge of books, of music, of medals ; manages an argument adroitly ; is genteel and gallant, and has a set of bye-phrases and quaint allusions always at hand to produce a laugh :—if he has a fault, it is that he does not listen so well as he speaks, is impatient of interruption, and is fond of being looked up to, without considering by whom. I believe, however, he has pretty well seen the folly of this.

Neither is his ready display of personal accomplishment and variety of resources an advantage to his writings. They sometimes present a desultory and slip-shod appearance, owing to this very circumstance. The same things that tell, perhaps, best, to a private circle round the fireside, are not always intelligible to the public, nor does he take pains to make them so. He is too confident and secure of his audience.

That which may be entertaining enough with the assistance of a certain liveliness of manner, may read very flat on paper, because it is abstracted from all the circumstances that had set it off to advantage. A writer should recollect that he has only to trust to the immediate impression of words, like a musician who sings without the accompaniment of an instrument. There is nothing to help out, or slubber over, the defects of the voice in the one case, nor of the style in the other. The reader may, if he pleases, get a very good idea of L. H——'s conversation from a very agreeable paper he has lately published, called the *Indicator*, than which nothing can be more happily conceived or executed.

The art of conversation is the art of hearing as well as of being heard. Authors in general are not good listeners. Some of the best talkers are, on this account, the worst company ; and some who are very indifferent, but very great talkers, are as bad. It is sometimes wonderful to see how a person, who has been entertaining or tiring a company by the hour together, drops his countenance as if he had

been shot, or had been seized with a sudden lock-jaw, the moment any one interposes a single observation.

The best converser I know, is, however, the best listener. I mean Mr. Northcote, the painter. Painters by their profession are not bound to shine in conversation, and they shine the more. He lends his ear to an observation, as if you had brought him a piece of news, and enters into it with as much avidity and earnestness, as if it interested himself personally. If he repeats an old remark or story, it is with the same freshness and point as for the first time. It always arises out of the occasion, and has the stamp of originality. There is no parroting of himself.

His look is a continual, ever-varying history-piece of what passes in his mind. His face is as a book. There need no marks of interjection or interrogation to what he says. His manner is quite picturesque. There is an excess of character and *naiveté* that never tires. His thoughts bubble up and sparkle, like beads on old wine. The fund of anecdote, the collection of curious particulars, is enough to set up any common retailer of jests, that dines out every day ; but these are not strung together like a row of galley-slaves, but are always introduced to illustrate some argument or bring out some fine distinction of character. The mixture of spleen adds to the sharpness of the point, like poisoned arrows.

Mr. Northcote enlarges with enthusiasm on the old painters, and tells good things of the new. The only thing he ever vexed me in was his liking the *Catalogue Raisonné.* I had almost as soon hear him talk of Titian's pictures (which he does with tears in his eyes, and looking just like them) as see the originals, and I had rather hear him talk of Sir Joshua's than see them. He is the last of that school who knew Goldsmith and Johnson. How finely he describes Pope ! His elegance of mind, his figure, his character were not unlike his own. He does not resemble a modern Englishman, but puts one in mind of a Roman Cardinal or Spanish Inquisitor.

I never ate or drank with Mr. Northcote ; but I have lived on his conversation with undiminished relish ever

since I can remember,—and when I leave it, I come out into the street with feelings lighter and more etherial than I have at any other time.—One of his *tête-à-têtes* would at any time make an Essay ; but he cannot write himself, because he loses himself in the connecting passages, is fearful of the effect, and wants the habit of bringing his ideas into one focus or point of view. A *lens* is necessary to collect the diverging rays, the refracted and broken angular lights of conversation on paper.

Contradiction is half the battle in talking—the being startled by what others say, and having to answer on the spot. You have to defend yourself, paragraph by paragraph, parenthesis in parenthesis. Perhaps it might be supposed that a person who excels in conversation and cannot write, would succeed better in dialogue. But the stimulus, the immediate irritation, would be wanting ; and the work would read flatter than ever, from not having the very thing it pretended to have.

Lively sallies and connected discourse are very different things. There are many persons of that impatient and restless turn of mind, that they cannot wait a moment for a conclusion, or follow up the thread of any argument. In the hurry of conversation their ideas are somewhat huddled into sense ; but in the intervals of thought, leave a great gap between. Montesquieu said, he often lost an idea before he could find words for it : yet he dictated, by way of saving time, to an amanuensis. This last is, in my opinion, a vile method, and a solecism in authorship.

Horne Tooke, among other paradoxes, used to maintain, that no one could write a good style who was not in the habit of talking and hearing the sound of his own voice. He might as well have said that no one could relish a good style without reading it aloud, as we find common people do to assist their apprehension. But there is a method of trying periods on the ear, or weighing them with the scales of the breath, without any articulate sound. Authors, as they write, may be said to " hear a sound so fine, there's nothing lives 'twixt it and silence." Even musicians generally compose in their heads.

I agree that no style is good, that is not fit to be spoken or read aloud with effect. This holds true not only of emphasis and cadence, but also with regard to natural idiom and colloquial freedom. Sterne's was in this respect the best style that ever was written. You fancy that you hear the people talking. For a contrary reason, no college-man writes a good style, or understands it when written. Fine writing is with him all verbiage and monotony—a translation into classical centos or hexameter lines.

That which I have just mentioned is among many instances I could give of ingenious absurdities advanced by Mr. Tooke in the heat and pride of controversy. A person who knew him well, and greatly admired his talents, said of him that he never (to his recollection) heard him defend an opinion which he thought right, or in which he believed him to be himself sincere. He indeed provoked his antagonists into the toils by the very extravagance of his assertions, and the teasing sophistry by which he rendered them plausible.

His temper was prompter to his skill. He had the manners of a man of the world, with great scholastic resources. He flung every one else off his guard, and was himself immoveable. I never knew any one who did not admit his superiority in this kind of warfare. He put a full stop to one of C——'s long-winded prefatory apologies for his youth and inexperience, by saying abruptly, " Speak up, young man ! " and, at another time, silenced a learned professor, by desiring an explanation of a word which the other frequently used, and which, he said, he had been many years trying to get at the meaning of,—the copulative Is ! He was the best intellectual fencer of his day. He made strange havoc of Fuseli's fantastic hieroglyphics, violent humours, and oddity of dialect.

Curran, who was sometimes of the same party, was lively and animated in convivial conversation, but dull in argument; nay, averse to any thing like reasoning or serious observation, and had the worst taste I ever knew. His favourite critical topics were to abuse Milton's *Paradise Lost,* and *Romeo and Juliet.* Indeed, he confessed a want of

sufficient acquaintance with books when he found himself in literary society in London.

He and Sheridan once dined at John Kemble's with Mrs. Inchbald and Mary Woolstonecroft, when the discourse almost wholly turned on Love, "from noon to dewy eve, a summer's day!" What a subject! What speakers, and what hearers! What would I not give to have been there, had I not learned it all from the bright eyes of Amaryllis, and may one day make a *Table-talk* of it!

Peter Pindar was rich in anecdote and grotesque humour, and profound in technical knowledge both of music, poetry, and painting, but he was gross and over-bearing. Wordsworth sometimes talks like a man inspired on subjects of poetry (his own out of the question)—Coleridge well on every subject, and G—dwin on none.

To finish this subject—Mrs. M——'s conversation is as fine-cut as her features, and I like to sit in the room with that sort of coronet face. What she says leaves a flavour, like fine green tea. H—t's is like champaigne, and N——'s like anchovy sandwiches. H—yd—n's is like a game at trap-ball: L—'s like snap-dragon: and my own (if I do not mistake the matter) is not very much unlike a game of nine-pins! . . . One source of the conversation of authors, is the character of other authors, and on that they are rich indeed. What things they say! What stories they tell of one another, and more particularly of their friends! If I durst only give some of these confidential communications! . . . The reader may perhaps think the foregoing a specimen of them:—but indeed he is mistaken.

I do not know of any greater impertinence, than for an obscure individual to set about pumping a character of celebrity. "Bring him to me," said a Doctor Tronchin, speaking of Rousseau, "that I may see whether he has any thing in him." Before you can take measure of the capacity of others, you ought to be sure that they have not taken measure of yours. They may think you a spy on them, and may not like their company. If you really want to know whether another person can talk well, begin by saying a good thing yourself, and you will have a right

to look for a rejoinder. "The best tennis-players," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "make the best matches."

> "————For wit is like a rest
> Held up at tennis, which men do the best
> With the best players."

We hear it often said of a great author, or a great actress, that they are very stupid people in private. But he was a fool that said so. *Tell me your company, and I'll tell you your manners.* In conversation, as in other things, the action and reaction should bear a certain proportion to each other.—Authors may, in some sense, be looked upon as foreigners, who are not naturalized even in their native soil. L—— once came down into the country to see us. He was "like the most capricious poet Ovid among the Goths." The country people thought him an oddity, and did not understand his jokes. It would be strange if they had; for he did not make any, while he staid. But when we crossed the country to Oxford, then he spoke a little. He and the old colleges were hail-fellow well met; and in the quadrangles, he "walked gowned."

There is a character of a gentleman; so there is a character of a scholar, which is no less easily recognised. The one has an air of books about him, as the other has of good-breeding. The one wears his thoughts as the other does his clothes, gracefully; and even if they are a little old-fashioned, they are not ridiculous: they have had their day. The gentleman shows, by his manner, that he has been used to respect from others: the scholar that he lays claim to self-respect and to a certain independence of opinion. The one has been accustomed to the best company; the other has passed his time in cultivating an intimacy with the best authors. There is nothing forward or vulgar in the behaviour of the one; nothing shrewd or petulant in the observations of the other, as if he should astonish the bye-standers, or was astonished himself at his own discoveries.

Good taste and good sense, like common politeness, are, or are supposed to be, matters of course. One is dis-

tinguished by an appearance of marked attention to every one present; the other manifests an habitual air of abstraction and absence of mind. The one is not an upstart with all the self-important airs of the founder of his own fortune; nor the other a self-taught man, with the repulsive self-sufficiency which arises from an ignorance of what hundreds have known before him. We must excuse perhaps a little conscious family-pride in the one, and a little harmless pedantry in the other.—As there is a class of the first character which sinks into the mere gentleman, that is, which has nothing but this sense of respectability and propriety to support it—so the character of a scholar not unfrequently dwindles down into the shadow of a shade, till nothing is left of it but the mere book-worm.

There is often something amiable as well as enviable in this last character. I know one such instance, at least. The person I mean has an admiration for learning, if he is only dazzled by its light. He lives among old authors, if he does not enter much into their spirit. He handles the covers, and turns over the page, and is familiar with the names and dates. He is busy and self-involved. He hangs like a film and cobweb upon letters, or is like the dust upon the outside of knowledge, which should not be rudely brushed aside. He follows learning as its shadow; but as such, he is respectable. He browzes on the husk and leaves of books, as the young fawn browzes on the bark and leaves of trees. Such a one lives all his life in a dream of learning, and has never once had his sleep broken by a real sense of things. He believes implicitly in genius, truth, virtue, liberty, because he finds the names of these things in books. He thinks that love and friendship are the finest things imaginable, both in practice and theory. The legend of good women is to him no fiction.

When he steals from the twilight of his cell, the scene breaks upon him like an illuminated missal, and all the people he sees are but so many figures in a *camera obscura*. He reads the world, like a favourite volume, only to find beauties in it, or like an edition of some old work which he is preparing for the press, only to make emendations in it,

and correct the errors that have inadvertently slipt in. He and his dog Tray are much the same honest, simple-hearted, faithful, affectionate creatures—if Tray could but read! His mind cannot take the impression of vice: but the gentleness of his nature turns gall to milk. He would not hurt a fly. He draws the picture of mankind from the guileless simplicity of his own heart: and when he dies, his spirit will take its smiling leave, without having ever had an ill thought of others, or the consciousness of one in itself!

ON ACTORS AND ACTING. I.

Players are "the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time"; the motley representatives of human nature. They are the only honest hypocrites. Their life is a voluntary dream; a studied madness. The height of their ambition is to be *beside themselves*. To-day kings, to-morrow beggars, it is only when they are themselves, that they are nothing. Made up of mimic laughter and tears, passing from the extremes of joy or woe at the prompter's call, they wear the livery of other men's fortunes; their very thoughts are not their own. They are, as it were, train-bearers in the pageant of life, and hold a glass up to humanity, frailer than itself. We see ourselves at second-hand in them: they shew us all that we are, all that we wish to be, and all that we dread to be.

The stage is an epitome, a bettered likeness of the world, with the dull part left out: and, indeed, with this omission, it is nearly big enough to hold all the rest. What brings the resemblance nearer is, that, as *they* imitate us, we, in our turn, imitate them. How many fine gentlemen do we owe to the stage? How many romantic lovers are mere Romeos in masquerade? How many soft bosoms have heaved with Juliet's sighs? They teach us when to laugh and when to weep, when to love and when to hate, upon principle and with a good grace!

Wherever there is a play-house, the world will go on not amiss. The stage not only refines the manners, but it is the best teacher of morals, for it is the truest and most intelligible picture of life. It stamps the image of virtue on the mind by first softening the rude materials of which it is composed, by a sense of pleasure. It regulates the pas-

sions by giving a loose to the imagination. It points out the selfish and depraved to our detestation, the amiable and generous to our admiration ; and if it clothes the more seductive vices with the borrowed graces of wit and fancy, even those graces operate as a diversion to the coarser poison of experience and bad example, and often prevent or carry off the infection by inoculating the mind with a certain taste and elegance.

To shew how little we agree with the common declamations against the immoral tendency of the stage on this score, we will hazard a conjecture, that the acting of the Beggar's Opera a certain number of nights every year since it was first brought out, has done more toward putting down the practice of highway robbery, than all the gibbets that ever were erected. A person, after seeing this piece is too deeply imbued with a sense of humanity, is in too good humour with himself and the rest of the world, to set about cutting throats or rifling pockets. Whatever makes a jest of vice, leaves it too much a matter of indifference for any one in his senses to rush desperately on his ruin for its sake.

We suspect that just the contrary effect must be produced by the representation of George Barnwell, which is too much in the style of the Ordinary's sermon to meet with any better success. The mind, in such cases, instead of being deterred by the alarming consequences held out to it, revolts against the denunciation of them as an insult offered to its free-will, and, in a spirit of defiance, returns a practical answer to them, by daring the worst that can happen. The most striking lesson ever read to levity and licentiousness, is in the last act of the Inconstant, where young Mirabel is preserved by the fidelity of his mistress, Orinda, in the disguise of a page, from the hands of assassins, into whose power he has been allured by the temptations of vice and beauty. There never was a rake who did not become in imagination a reformed man, during the representation of the last trying scenes of this admirable comedy.

If the stage is useful as a school of instruction, it is no less so as a source of amusement. It is the source of the

greatest enjoyment at the time, and a never-failing fund of agreeable reflection afterwards. The merits of a new play, or of a new actor, are always among the first topics of polite conversation. One way in which public exhibitions contribute to refine and humanise mankind, is by supplying them with ideas and subjects of conversation and interest in common. The progress of civilisation is in proportion to the number of commonplaces current in society.

For instance, if we meet with a stranger at an inn or in a stage-coach, who knows nothing but his own affairs, his shop, his customers, his farm, his pigs, his poultry, we can carry on no conversation with him on these local and personal matters : the only way is to let him have all the talk to himself. But if he has fortunately ever seen Mr. Liston act, this is an immediate topic of mutual conversation, and we agree together the rest of the evening in discussing the merits of that inimitable actor, with the same satisfaction as in talking over the affairs of the most intimate friend.

If the stage thus introduces us familiarly to our contemporaries, it also brings us acquainted with former times. It is an interesting revival of past ages, manners, opinions, dresses, persons, and actions,—whether it carries us back to the wars of York and Lancaster, or half-way back to the heroic times of Greece and Rome, in some translation from the French, or quite back to the age of Charles II. in the scenes of Congreve and of Etherege (the gay Sir George!) —happy age, when kings and nobles led purely ornamental lives ; when the utmost stretch of a morning's study went no further than the choice of a sword-knot, or the adjustment of a side-curl ; when the soul spoke out in all the pleasing eloquence of dress ; and beaux and belles, enamoured of themselves in one another's follies, fluttered like gilded butterflies in giddy mazes through the walks of St. James's Park !

A good company of comedians, a Theatre-Royal judiciously managed, is your true Herald's College ; the only Antiquarian Society, that is worth a rush. It is for this

reason that there is such an air of romance about players, and that it is pleasanter to see them, even in their own persons, than any of the three learned professions. We feel more respect for John Kemble in a plain coat, than for the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack. He is surrounded, to our eyes, with a greater number of imposing recollections: he is a more reverend piece of formality; a more complicated tissue of costume. We do not know whether to look upon this accomplished actor as Pierre or King John or Coriolanus or Cato or Leontes or the Stranger. But we see in him a stately hieroglyphic of humanity; a living monument of departed greatness, a sombre comment on the rise and fall of kings. We look after him till he is out of sight, as we listen to a story of one of Ossian's heroes, to "a tale of other times!"

One of the most affecting things we know is to see a favourite actor take leave of the stage. We were present not long ago when Mr. Bannister quitted it. We do not wonder that his feelings were overpowered on the occasion: ours were nearly so too. We remembered him, in the first heyday of our youthful spirits, in the *Prize*, in which he played so delightfully with that fine old croaker Suett, and Madame Storace,—in the farce of *My Grandmother*, in the *Son-in-Law*, in *Autolycus*, and in *Scrub*, in which our satisfaction was at its height. At that time, King and Parsons, and Dodd and Quick, and Edwin were in the full vigour of their reputation. who are now all gone. We still feel the vivid delight with which we used to see their names in the playbills, as we went along to the Theatre. Bannister was one of the last of these that remained; and we parted with him as we should with one of our oldest and best friends.

The most pleasant feature in the profession of a player, and which, indeed, is peculiar to it, is that we not only admire the talents of those who adorn it, but we contract a personal intimacy with them. There is no class of society whom so many persons regard with affection as actors. We greet them on the stage; we like to meet them in the streets; they almost always recall to us pleasant associations; and we feel our gratitude excited, without the

uneasiness of a sense of obligation. The very gaiety and popularity, however, which surround the life of a favourite performer, make the retiring from it a very serious business. It glances a mortifying reflection on the shortness of human life, and the vanity of human pleasures. Something reminds us, that "all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

ON ACTORS AND ACTING. II.

It has been considered as the misfortune of first-rate talents for the stage, that they leave no record behind them except that of vague rumour, and that the genius of a great actor perishes with him, "leaving the world no copy." This is a misfortune, or at least an unpleasant circumstance, to actors; but it is, perhaps, an advantage to the stage. It leaves an opening to originality. The stage is always beginning anew; the candidates for theatrical reputation are always setting out afresh, unencumbered by the affectation of the faults or excellences of their predecessors. In this respect, we should imagine that the average quantity of dramatic talent remains more nearly the same than that in any other walk of art. In no other instance do the complaints of the degeneracy of the moderns seem so unfounded as in this; and Colley Cibber's account of the regular decline of the stage, from the time of Shakspeare to that of Charles II., and from the time of Charles II. to the beginning of George II., appears quite ridiculous.

The stage is a place where genius is sure to come upon its legs, in a generation or two at farthest. In the other arts (as painting and poetry), it has been contended that what has been well done already, by giving rise to endless vapid imitations, is an obstacle to what might be done well hereafter: that the models or *chef-d'oeuvres* of art, where they are accumulated, choke up the path to excellence; and that the works of genius, where they can be rendered permanent and handed down from age to age, not only prevent, but render superfluous, future productions of the same kind.

We have not, neither do we want, two Shakspeares, two Miltons, two Raphaels, any more than we require two suns in the same sphere. Even Miss O'Neill stands a little in the way of our recollections of Mrs. Siddons. But Mr. Kean is an excellent substitute for the memory of Garrick, whom we never saw. When an author dies, it is no matter, for his works remain. When a great actor dies, there is a void produced in society, a gap which requires to be filled up. Who does not go to see Kean? Who, if Garrick were alive, would go to see him? At least one or the other must have quitted the stage.

We have seen what a ferment has been excited among our living artists by the exhibition of the works of the old Masters at the British Gallery. What would the actors say to it, if, by any spell or power of necromancy, all the celebrated actors, for the last hundred years, could be made to appear again on the boards of Covent Garden and Drury-Lane, for the last time, in all their most brilliant parts? What a rich treat to the town, what a feast for the critics, to go and see Betterton, and Booth, and Wilks, and Sandford, and Nokes, and Leigh, and Penkethman, and Bullock, and Estcourt, and Dogget, and Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Montfort, and Mrs. Oldfield, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Mrs. Cibber, and Cibber himself, the prince of coxcombs, and Macklin, and Quin, and Rich, and Mrs. Clive, and Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Abington, and Weston, and Shuter, and Garrick, and all the rest of those who "gladdened life, and whose deaths eclipsed the gaiety of nations."

We should certainly be there. We should buy a ticket for the season. We should enjoy *our hundred days* again. We should not lose a single night. We would not, for a great deal, be absent from Betterton's Hamlet or his Brutus, or from Booth's Cato, as it was first acted to the contending applause of Whigs and Tories. We should be in the first row when Mrs. Barry (who was kept by Lord Rochester, and with whom Otway was in love) played Monimia or Belvidera; and we suppose we should go to see Mrs. Bracegirdle (with whom all the world was in love)

in all her parts. We should then know exactly whether Penkethman's manner of picking a chicken, and Bullock's mode of devouring asparagus, answered to the ingenious account of them in the Tatler; and whether Dogget was equal to Dowton—whether Mrs. Montfort* or Mrs. Abington was the finest lady—whether Wilks or Cibber was the best Sir Harry Wildair—whether Macklin was really "the Jew that Shakspeare drew," and whether Garrick was,

* The following lively description of this actress is given by Cibber in his Apology :—

"What found most employment for her whole various excellence at once, was the part of Melantha, in Marriage-à-la-mode. Melantha is as finished an impertinent as ever fluttered in a drawing-room, and seems to contain the most complete system of female foppery that could possibly be crowded into the tortured form of a fine lady. Her language, dress, motion, manners, soul, and body, are in a continual hurry to be something more than is necessary or commendable. And though I doubt it will be a vain labour to offer you a just likeness of Mrs. Montfort's action, yet the fantastic impression is still so strong in my memory, that I cannot help saying something, though fantastically, about it. The first ridiculous airs that break from her are upon a gallant never seen before, who delivers her a letter from her father, recommending him to her good graces as an honourable lover.

Here now, one would think she might naturally shew a little of the sex's decent reserve, though never so slightly covered! No, sir; not a tittle of it; modesty is the virtue of a poor-soul'd country gentlewomen: she is too much a court-lady, to be under so vulgar a confusion: she reads the letter, therefore, with a careless, dropping lip, and an erected brow, humming it hastily over, as if she were impatient to outgo her father's commands, by making a complete conquest of him at once: and that the letter might not embarrass her attack, crack! she crumbles it at once into her palm, and pours upon him her whole artillery of airs, eyes, and motion; down goes her dainty, diving body to the ground, as if she were sinking under the conscious load of her own attractions; then launches into a flood of fine language and compliment, still playing her chest forward in fifty falls and risings, like a swan upon waving water; and, to complete her impertinence, she is so rapidly fond of her own wit, that she will not give her lover leave to praise it. Silent assenting bows, and vain endeavours to speak, are all the share of the conversation he is admitted to, which at last he is relieved from, by her engagement to half a score visits, which she *swims* from him to make, with a promise to return in a twinkling."—*The Life of Colley Cibber*, p. 138.

upon the whole, so great an actor as the world have made him out !

Many people have a strong desire to pry into the secrets of futurity : for our own parts, we should be satisfied if we had the power to recall the dead, and live the past over again as often as we pleased ! Players, after all, have little reason to complain of their hard-earned, short-lived popularity. One thunder of applause from pit, boxes, and gallery, is equal to a whole immortality of posthumous fame : and when we hear an actor, whose modesty is equal to his merit, declare, that he would like to see a dog wag his tail in approbation, what must he feel when he sees the whole house in a roar ! Besides, Fame, as if their reputation had been entrusted to her alone, has been particularly careful of the renown of her theatrical favourites : she forgets one by one, and year by year, those who have been great lawyers, great statesmen, and great warriors in their day ; but the name of Garrick still survives with the works of Reynolds and of Johnson.

Actors have been accused, as a profession, of being extravagant and dissipated. While they are said to be so as a piece of common cant, they are likely to continue so. But there is a sentence in Shakspeare which should be stuck as a label in the mouths of our beadles and whippers-in of morality : " The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together : our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not : and our vices would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues."

With respect to the extravagance of actors, as a traditional character, it is not to be wondered at. They live from hand to mouth : they plunge from want into luxury ; they have no means of making money *breed*, and all professions that do not live by turning money into money, or have not a certainty of accumulating it in the end by parsimony, spend it. Uncertain of the future, they make sure of the present moment. This is not unwise. Chilled with poverty, steeped in contempt, they sometimes pass into the sunshine of fortune, and are lifted to the very pinnacle of public favour ; yet even there cannot calculate

on the continuance of success, but are, "like the giddy sailor on the mast, ready with every blast to topple down into the fatal bowels of the deep!" Besides, if the young enthusiast, who is smitten with the stage, and with the public as a mistress, were naturally a close *hunks*, he would become or remain a city clerk, instead of turning player.

Again, with respect to the habit of convivial indulgence, an actor, to be a good one, must have a great spirit of enjoyment in himself, strong impulses, strong passions, and a strong sense of pleasure: for it is his business to imitate the passions, and to communicate pleasure to others. A man of genius is not a machine. The neglected actor may be excused if he drinks oblivion of his disappointments; the successful one, if he quaffs the applause of the world, and enjoys the friendship of those who are the friends of the favourites of fortune, in draughts of nectar.

There is no path so steep as that of fame: no labour so hard as the pursuit of excellence. The intellectual excitement, inseparable from those professions which call forth all our sensibility to pleasure and pain, require some corresponding physical excitement to support our failure, and not a little to allay the ferment of the spirits attendant on success. If there is any tendency to dissipation beyond this in the profession of a player, it is owing to the prejudices entertained against them, to that spirit of bigotry which in a neighbouring country would deny actors Christian burial after their death, and to that cant of criticism, which, in our own, slurs over their characters, while living, with a half-witted jest.

A London engagement is generally considered by actors as the *ne plus ultra* of their ambition, as "a consummation devoutly to be wished," as the great prize in the lottery of their professional life. But this appears to us, who are not in the secret, to be rather the prose termination of their adventurous career: it is the provincial commencement that is the poetical and truly enviable part of it. After that, they have comparatively little to hope or fear. "The wine of life is drunk, and but the lees remain."

In London, they become gentlemen, and the King's

servants : but it is the romantic mixture of the hero and the vagabond that constitutes the essence of the player's life. It is the transition from their real to their assumed characters, from the contempt of the world to the applause of the multitude, that gives its zest to the latter, and raises them as much above common humanity at night, as in the daytime they are depressed below it. " Hurried from fierce extremes, by contrast made more fierce,"—it is rags and a flock-bed which give their splendour to a plume of feathers and a throne.

We should suppose, that if the most admired actor on the London stage were brought to confession on this point, he would acknowledge that all the applause he had received from " brilliant and overflowing audiences," was nothing to the light-headed intoxication of unlooked-for success in a barn. In town, actors are criticised : in country-places, they are wondered at, or hooted at : it is of little consequence which, so that the interval is not too long between. For ourselves, we own that the description of the strolling player in Gil Blas, soaking his dry crusts in the well by the roadside, presents to us a perfect picture of human felicity:

OF PERSONS ONE WOULD WISH TO HAVE SEEN.

"Come like shadows—so depart."

B—— it was, I think, who suggested this subject, as well as the defence of Guy Faux, which I urged him to execute. As, however, he would undertake neither, I suppose I must do both—a task for which he would have been much fitter, no less from the temerity than the felicity of his pen—

> "Never so sure our rapture to create
> As when it touch'd the brink of all we hate."

Compared with him I shall, I fear, make but a commonplace piece of business of it; but I should be loth the idea was entirely lost, and besides I may avail myself of some hints of his in the progress of it. I am sometimes, I suspect, a better reporter of the ideas of other people than expounder of my own. I pursue the one too far into paradox or mysticism; the others I am not bound to follow farther than I like, or than seems fair and reasonable.

On the question being started, A—— said, "I suppose the two first persons you would choose to see would be the two greatest names in English literature, Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke?" In this A——, as usual, reckoned without his host. Every one burst out a laughing at the expression of B——'s face, in which impatience was restrained by courtesy. "Yes, the greatest names," he stammered out hastily, "but they were not persons—not persons."—"Not persons?" said A——, looking wise and foolish at the same time, afraid his triumph might be premature. "That is," rejoined B——, "not characters, you know. By Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton, you mean the Essay on the Human Understanding, and the *Principia*, which we have to this day. Beyond their contents there is nothing personally interesting in the men. But what we want to see any one

bodily for, is when there is something peculiar, striking in the individuals, more than we can learn from their writings, and yet are curious to know. I dare say Locke and Newton were very like Kneller's portraits of them. But who could paint Shakspeare? "

"Ay," retorted A——, "there it is; then I suppose you would prefer seeing him and Milton instead?"—"No," said B——, "neither. I have seen so much of Shakspeare on the stage and on book-stalls, in frontispieces and on mantle-pieces, that I am quite tired of the everlasting repetition: and as to Milton's face, the impressions that have come down to us of it I do not like; it is too starched and puritanical; and I should be afraid of losing some of the manna of his poetry in the leaven of his countenance and the precisian's band and gown."

"I shall guess no more," said A——. "Who is it, then, you would like to see "in his habit as he lived," if you had your choice of the whole range of English literature?" B—— then named Sir Thomas Browne and Fulke Greville, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, as the two worthies whom he should feel the greatest pleasure to encounter on the floor of his apartment in their night-gown and slippers, and to exchange friendly greeting with them. At this A—— laughed outright, and conceived B—— was jesting with him; but as no one followed his example, he thought there might be something in it, and waited for an explanation in a state of whimsical suspense.

B—— then (as well as I can remember a conversation that passed twenty years ago—how time slips!) went on as follows. "The reason why I pitch upon these two authors is, that their writings are riddles, and they themselves the most mysterious of personages. They resemble the soothsayers of old, who dealt in dark hints and doubtful oracles; and I should like to ask them the meaning of what no mortal but themselves, I should suppose, can fathom. There is Dr. Johnson, I have no curiosity, no strange uncertainty about him: he and Boswell together have pretty well let me into the secret of what passed through his mind. He and other writers like him are

sufficiently explicit: my friends, whose repose I should be tempted to disturb (were it in my power) are implicit, inextricable, inscrutable.

"And call up him who left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold."

"When I look at that obscure but gorgeous prose-composition (the *Urn-Burial*) I seem to myself to look into a deep abyss, at the bottom of which are hid pearls and rich treasure; or it is like a stately labyrinth of doubt and withering speculation, and I would invoke the spirit of the authôr to lead me through it. Besides, who would not be curious to see the lineaments of a man who, having himself been twice married, wished that mankind were propagated like trees! As to Fulke Greville, he is like nothing but one of his own "Prologues spoken by the ghost of an old king of Ormus," a truly formidable and inviting personage: his style is apocalyptical, cabalistical, a knot worthy of such an apparition to untie; and for the unravelling a passage or two, I would stand the brunt of an encounter with so portentous a commentator!"

"I am afraid in that case," said A——, "that if the mystery were once cleared up, the merit might be lost";—and turning to me, whispered a friendly apprehension, that while B—— continued to admire these old crabbed authors, he would never become a popular writer. Dr. Donne was mentioned as a writer of the same period, with a very interesting countenance, whose history was singular, and whose meaning was often quite as *uncomeatable*, without a personal citation from the dead, as that of any of his contemporaries. The volume was produced; and while some one was expatiating on the exquisite simplicity and beauty of the portrait prefixed to the old edition, A—— got hold of the poetry, and exclaiming "What have we here?" read the following:—

"Here lies a She-Sun and a He-Moon here,
She gives the best light to his sphere,
Or each is both and all, and so
They unto one another nothing owe."

There was no resisting this, till B——, seizing the volume, turned to the beautiful "Lines to his Mistress," dissuading her from accompanying him abroad, and read them with suffused features and a faltering tongue.

"By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words' masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threaten'd me,
I calmly beg. But by thy father's wrath,
By all pains which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee; and all the oaths which I
And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy
Here I unswear, and overswear them thus,
Thou shalt not love by ways so dangerous.
Temper, oh fair Love! love's impetuous rage,
Be my true mistress still, not my feign'd Page;
I'll go, and, by thy kind leave, leave behind
Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
Thirst to come back; oh, if thou die before,
My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
Thy (else Almighty) beauty cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness; thou hast read
How roughly he in pieces shivered
Fair Orithea, whom he swore he lov'd.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have prov'd
Dangers unurg'd: Feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one in th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
Thy body's habit, nor mind; be not strange
To thyself only. All will spy in thy face
A blushing, womanly, discovering grace.
Richly cloth'd apes are called apes, and as soon
Eclips'd as bright we call the moon the moon.
Men of France, changeable cameleons,
Spittles of diseases, shops of fashions,
Love's fuellers, and the richest company
Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
Will quickly know thee . . O stay here! for thee
England is only a worthy gallery,
To walk in expectation; till from thence
Our greatest King call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dream me some happiness,
Nor let thy looks our long hid love confess,
Nor praise, nor dispraise me; nor bless, nor curse

> Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
> With midnight startings, crying out, Oh, oh,
> Nurse, oh, my love is slain, I saw him go
> O'er the white Alps alone ; I saw him, I,
> Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
> Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
> Think it enough for me to have had thy love."

Some one then inquired of B—— if we could not see from the window the Temple-walk in which Chaucer used to take his exercise ; and on his name being put to the vote, I was pleased to find that there was a general sensation in his favour in all but A——, who said something about the ruggedness of the metre, and even objected to the quaintness of the orthography. I was vexed at this superficial gloss, pertinaciously reducing every thing to its own trite level, and asked "if he did not think it would be worth while to scan the eye that had first greeted the Muse in that dim twilight and early dawn of English literature ; to see the head, round which the visions of fancy must have played like gleams of inspiration or a sudden glory ; to watch those lips that "lisped in numbers, for the numbers came"— as by a miracle, or as if the dumb should speak ?

Nor was it alone that he had been the first to tune his native tongue (however imperfectly to modern ears) ; but he was himself a noble, manly character, standing before his age and striving to advance it ; a pleasant humourist withal, who has not only handed down to us the living manners of his time, but had, no doubt, store of curious and quaint devices, and would make as hearty a companion as Mine Host of Tabard. His interview with Petrarch is fraught with interest. Yet I would rather have seen Chaucer in company with the author of the Decameron, and have heard them exchange their best stories together, the Squire's Tale against the story of the Falcon, the Wife of Bath's Prologue against the Adventures of Friar Albert.

How fine to see the high mysterious brow which learning then wore, relieved by the gay, familiar tone of men of the world, and by the courtesies of genius. Surely, the thoughts and feelings which passed through the minds of these great revivers of learning, these Cadmuses who sowed

the teeth of letters, must have stamped an expression on their features, as different from the moderns as their books, and well worth the perusal.

Dante," I continued " is as interesting a person as his own Ugolino, one whose lineaments curiosity would as eagerly devour in order to penetrate his spirit, and the only one of the Italian poets I should care much to see. There is a fine portrait of Ariosto by no less a hand than Titian's; light, Moorish, spirited, but not answering our idea. The same artist's large colossal profile of Peter Aretine is the only likeness of the kind that has the effect of conversing with " the mighty dead," and this is truly spectral, ghastly, necromantic."

B—— put it to me if I should like to see Spenser as well as Chaucer; and I answered without hesitation, "No; for that his beauties were ideal, visionary, not palpable or personal, and therefore connected with less curiosity about the man. His poetry was the essence of romance, a very halo round the bright orb of fancy; and the bringing in the individual might dissolve the charm. No tones of voice could come up to the mellifluous cadence of his verse; no form but of a winged angel could vie with the airy shapes he has described. He was (to our apprehensions) rather 'a creature of the element, that lived in the rainbow and played in the plighted clouds,' than an ordinary mortal. Or if he did appear, I should wish it to be as a mere vision, like one of his own pageants, and that he should pass by unquestioned like a dream or sound—

> ——'*That* was Arion crown'd:
> So went he playing on the wat'ry plain!"

Captain C. muttered something about Columbus, and M. C. hinted at the Wandering Jew; but the last was set aside as spurious, and the first made over to the New World.

" I should like," said Miss D——, " to have seen Pope talking with Patty Blount; and I *have* seen Goldsmith." Every one turned round to look at Miss D——, as if by so doing they too could get a sight of Goldsmith.

"Where," asked a harsh croaking voice, "was Dr. Johnson in the years 1745-6? He did not write any thing that we know of, nor is there any account of him in Boswell during those two years. Was he in Scotland with the Pretender? He seems to have passed through the scenes in the Highlands in company with Boswell many years after "with lack-lustre eye," yet as if they were familiar to him, or associated in his mind with interests that he durst not explain. If so, it would be an additional reason for my liking him; and I would give something to have seen him seated in the tent with the youthful Majesty of Britain, and penning the Proclamation to all true subjects and adherents of the legitimate Government."

"I thought," said A——, turning short round upon B——, "that you of the Lake School did not like Pope"?—"Not like Pope! My dear sir, you must be under a mistake—I can read him over and over for ever!"—"Why certainly, the 'Essay on Man' must be allowed to be a master-piece."—"It may be so, but I seldom look into it."—"Oh! then it's his Satires you admire?"—"No, not his Satires, but his friendly Epistles and his compliments."—"Compliments! I did not know he ever made any."—"The finest," said B——, "that were ever paid by the wit of man. Each of them is worth an estate for life—nay, is an immortality. There is that superb one to Lord Cornbury:

> 'Despise low joys, low gains;
> Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains;
> Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains.'

"Was there ever more artful insinuation of idolatrous praise? And then the noble apotheosis of his friend Lord Mansfield (however little deserved), when, speaking of the House of Lords, he adds—

> 'Conspicuous scene! another yet is nigh,
> (More silent far) where kings and poets lie;
> Where Murray (long enough his country's pride)
> Shall be no more than Tully or than Hyde!'

"And with what a fine turn of indignant flattery he addresses Lord Bolingbroke—

> 'Why rail they then, if but one wreath of mine,
> Oh! all accomplish'd St. John, deck thy shrine?'

"Or turn," continued B——, with a slight hectic on his cheek and his eye glittering, "to his list of early friends:

> 'But why then publish? Granville the polite,
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
> Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise,
> And Congreve loved and Swift endured my lays:
> The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read,
> Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head;
> And St. John's self (great Dryden's friend before)
> Received with open arms one poet more.
> Happy my studies, if by these approved!
> Happier their author, if by these beloved!
> From these the world will judge of men and books,
> Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cooks.'"

Here his voice totally failed him, and throwing down the book, he said, "Do you think I would not wish to have been friends with such a man as this?"

"What say you to Dryden?"—"He rather made a show of himself, and courted popularity in that lowest temple of Fame, a coffee-house, so as in some measure to vulgarize one's idea of him. Pope, on the contrary, reached the very *beau idéal* of what a poet's life should be; and his fame while living seemed to be an emanation from that which was to circle his name after death. He was so far enviable (and one would feel proud to have witnessed the rare spectacle in him) that he was almost the only poet and man of genius who met with his reward on this side of the tomb, who realized in friends, fortune, the esteem of the world, the most sanguine hopes of a youthful ambition, and who found that sort of patronage from the great during his lifetime which they would be thought anxious to bestow upon him after his death. Read Gay's verses to him on his supposed return from Greece, after his translation of Homer was finished, and say if you would not gladly join the bright procession that welcomed him home, or see it once more land at Whitehall-stairs."—"Still," said Miss D——, "I would

rather have seen him talking with Patty Blount, or riding by in a coronet-coach with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu!"

E——, who was deep in a game of piquet at the other end of the room, whispered to M. C. to ask if Junius would not be a fit person to invoke from the dead. "Yes," said B——, "provided he would agree to lay aside his mask."

We were now at a stand for a short time, when Fielding was mentioned as a candidate: only one, however, seconded the proposition. "Richardson?"—"By all means, but only to look at him through the glass-door of his back-shop, hard at work upon one of his novels (the most extraordinary contrast that ever was presented between an author and his works), but not to let him come behind his counter lest he should want you to turn customer, nor to go upstairs with him, lest he should offer to read the first manuscript of Sir Charles Grandison, which was originally written in eight and twenty volumes octavo, or get out the letters of his female correspondents, to prove that Joseph Andrews was low."

There was but one statesman in the whole of English history that any one expressed the least desire to see—Oliver Cromwell, with his fine, frank, rough, pimply face, and wily policy;—and one enthusiast, John Bunyan, the immortal author of the Pilgrim's Progress. It seemed that if he came into the room, dreams would follow him, and that each person would nod under his golden cloud, "nigh-sphered in Heaven," a canopy as strange and stately as any in Homer.

Of all persons near our own time, Garrick's name was received with the greatest enthusiasm, who was proposed by J. F——. He presently superseded both Hogarth and Handel, who had been talked of, but then it was on condition that he should act in tragedy and comedy, in the play and the farce, Lear and Wildair and Abel Drugger. What a *sight for sore eyes* that would be! Who would not part with a year's income at least, almost with a year of his natural life, to be present at it? Besides, as he could not act alone, and recitations are unsatisfactory things, what a troop he must bring with him—the silver-tongued

Barry, and Quin, and Shuter and Weston, and Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Pritchard, of whom I have heard my father speak as so great a favourite when he was young !

This would indeed be a revival of the dead, the restoring of art ; and so much the more desirable, as such is the lurking scepticism mingled with our overstrained admiration of past excellence, that though we have the speeches of Burke, the portraits of Reynolds, the writings of Goldsmith, and the conversation of Johnson, to show what people could do at that period, and to confirm the universal testimony to the merits of Garrick ; yet, as it was before our time, we have our misgivings, as if it was probably after all little better than a Bartlemy-fair actor, dressed out to play Macbeth in a scarlet coat and a laced cocked-hat. For one, I should like to have seen and heard with my own eyes and ears.

Certainly, by all accounts, if any one was ever moved by the true histrionic *aestus*, it was Garrick. When he followed the Ghost in Hamlet, he did not drop the sword, as most actors do behind the scenes, but kept the point raised the whole way round, so fully was he possessed with the idea, or so anxious not to lose sight of his part for a moment. Once at a splendid dinner-party at Lord ——'s, they suddenly missed Garrick, and could not imagine what was become of him, till they were drawn to the window by the convulsive screams and peals of laughter of a young negro boy, who was rolling on the ground in an ecstacy of delight to see Garrick mimicing a turkey-cock in the court-yard, with his coat-tail stuck out behind, and in a seeming flutter of feathered rage and pride. Of our party only two persons present had seen the British Roscius ; and they seemed as willing as the rest to renew their acquaintance with their old favourite.

We were interrupted in the hey-day and mid-career of this fanciful speculation, by a grumbler in a corner, who declared it was a shame to make all this rout about a mere player and farce-writer, to the neglect and exclusion of the fine old dramatists, the contemporaries and rivals of Shakspeare.

B —— said he had anticipated this objection when he had named the author of Mustapha and Alaham ; and out of caprice insisted on keeping him to represent the set, in preference to the wild hair-brained enthusiast Kit Marlowe ; to the sexton of St. Ann's, Webster, with his melancholy yew-trees and death's-heads ; to Deckar, who was but a garrulous proser ; to the voluminous Heywood ; and even to Beaumont and Fletcher, whom we might offend by complimenting the wrong author on their joint productions. Lord Brook, on the contrary, stood quite by himself, or in Cowley's words, was "a vast species alone." Some one hinted at the circumstance of his being a lord, which rather startled B——, but he said a *ghost* would perhaps dispense with strict etiquette, on being regularly addressed by his title.

Ben Jonson divided our suffrages pretty equally. Some were afraid he would begin to traduce Shakspeare, who was not present to defend himself. "If he grows disagreeable," it was whispered aloud, "there is G—— can match him." At length, his romantic visit to Drummond of Hawthornden was mentioned, and turned the scale in his favour.

B—— inquired if there was any one that was hanged that I would choose to mention ? And I answered, Eugene Aram*. The name of the "Admirable Crichton" was suddenly started as a splendid example of *waste* talents, so different from the generality of his countrymen. This choice was mightily approved by a North-Briton present, who declared himself descended from that prodigy of learning and accomplishment, and said he had family-plate in his possession as vouchers for the fact, with the initials A. C.—*Admirable Crichton* ! H—— laughed or rather roared as heartily at this as I should think he has done for many years.

The last-named Mitre-courtier† then wished to know whether there were any metaphysicians to whom one might

* See Newgate Calendar for 1758.

† B—— at this time occupied chambers in Mitre Court, Fleet Street.

be tempted to apply the wizard spell? I replied, there were only six in modern times deserving the name—Hobbes, Berkeley, Butler, Hartley, Hume, Leibnitz; and perhaps Jonathan Edwards, a Massachusets man*. As to the French, who talked fluently of having *created* this science, there was not a title in any of their writings, that was not to be found literally in the authors I had mentioned. (Horne Tooke, who might have a claim to come in under the head of Grammar, was still living.) None of these names seemed to excite much interest, and I did not plead for the re-appearance of those who might be thought best fitted by the abstracted nature of their studies for their present spiritual and disembodied state, and who, even while on this living stage, were nearly divested of common flesh and blood.

As A—— with an uneasy fidgetty face was about to put some question about Mr. Locke and Dugald Stewart, he was prevented by M. C. who observed, "If J—— was here, he would undoubtedly be for having up those profound and redoubted scholiasts, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus." I said this might be fair enough in him who had read or fancied he had read the original works, but I did not see how we could have any right to call up these authors to give an account of themselves in person, till we had looked into their writings.

By this time it should seem that some rumour of our whimsical deliberation had got wind, and had disturbed the *irritabile genus* in their shadowy abodes, for we received messages from several candidates that we had just been thinking of. Gray declined our invitation, though he had

* Lord Bacon is not included in this list, nor do I know where he should come in. It is not easy to make room for him and his reputation together. This great and celebrated man in some of his works recommends it to pour a bottle of claret into the ground of a morning, and to stand over it, inhaling the perfumes. So he sometimes enriched the dry and barren soil of speculation with the fine aromatic spirit of his genius. His "Essays" and his "Advancement of Learning" are works of vast depth and scope of observation. The last, though it contains no positive discoveries, is a noble chart of the human intellect, and a guide to all future inquirers.

not yet been asked : Gay offered to come and bring in his hand the Duchess of Bolton, the original Polly : Steele and Addison left their cards as Captain Sentry and Sir Roger de Coverley : Swift came in and sat down without speaking a word, and quitted the room as abruptly : Otway and Chatterton were seen lingering on the opposite side of the Styx, but could not muster enough between them to pay Charon his fare : Thomson fell asleep in the boat, and was rowed back again—and Burns sent a low fellow, one John Barleycorn, an old companion of his who had conducted him to the other world, to say that he had during his lifetime been drawn out of his retirement as a show, only to be made an exciseman of, and that he would rather remain where he was. He desired, however, to shake hands by his representative—the hand, thus held out, was in a burning fever, and shook prodigiously.

The room was hung round with several portraits of eminent painters. While we were debating whether we should demand speech with these masters of mute eloquence, whose features were so familiar to us, it seemed that all at once they glided from their frames, and seated themselves at some little distance from us.

There was Leonardo with his majestic beard and watchful eye, having a bust of Archimedes before him ; next him was Raphael's graceful head turned round to the Fornarina ; and on his other side was Lucretia Borgia, with calm, golden locks ; Michael Angelo had placed the model of St. Peter's on the table before him ; Corregio had an angel at his side ; Titian was seated with his Mistress between himself and Giorgioni ; Guido was accompanied by his own Aurora, who took a dice-box from him ; Claude held a mirror in his hand ; Rubens patted a beautiful panther (led in by a satyr) on the head ; Vandyke appeared as his own Paris, and Rembrandt was hid under furs, gold chains and jewels, which Sir Joshua eyed closely, holding his hand so as to shade his forehead.

Not a word was spoken ; and as we rose to do them homage, they still presented the same surface to the view. Not being *bonâ-fide* representations of living people, we got

rid of the splendid apparitions by signs and dumb show. As soon as they had melted into thin air, there was a loud noise at the outer door, and we found it was Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandaio, who had been raised from the dead by their earnest desire to see their illustrious successors—

> "Whose names on earth
> In Fame's eternal records live for aye!"

Finding them gone, they had no ambition to be seen after them, and mournfully withdrew. "Egad!" said B——, "those are the very fellows I should like to have had some talk with, to know how they could see to paint when all was dark around them?"

"But shall we have nothing to say," interrogated G. J——, "to the Legend of Good Women?"—"Name, name, Mr. J——," cried H—— in a boisterous tone of friendly exultation, "name as many as you please, without reserve or fear of molestation!" J—— was perplexed between so many amiable recollections, that the name of the lady of his choice expired in a pensive whiff of his pipe; and B—— impatiently declared for the Duchess of Newcastle. Mrs. Hutchinson was no sooner mentioned, than she carried the day from the Duchess.

We were the less solicitous on this subject of filling up the posthumous lists of Good Women, as there was already one in the room as good, as sensible, and in all respects as exemplary, as the best of them could be for their lives! "I should like vastly to have seen Ninon de l'Enclos," said that incomparable person; and this immediately put us in mind that we had neglected to pay honour due to our friends on the other side of the Channel: Voltaire, the patriarch of levity, and Rousseau, the father of sentiment, Montaigne and Rabelais (great in wisdom and in wit), Molière and that illustrious group that are collected round him (in the print of that subject) to hear him read his comedy of the Tartuffe at the house of Ninon; Racine, La Fontaine, Rochefoucault, St. Evremont, &c.

"There is one person," said a shrill, querulous voice, "I would rather see than all these—Don Quixote!"

"Come, come!" said H——; "I thought we should have no heroes, real or fabulous. What say you, Mr. B——? Are you for eking out your shadowy list with such names as Alexander, Julius Caesar, Tamerlane, or Ghengis Khan?" —"Excuse me," said B——, "on the subject of characters in active life, plotters and disturbers of the world, I have a crotchet of my own, which I beg leave to reserve."—"No, no! come, out with your worthies!"

"What do you think of Guy Faux and Judas Iscariot?" H—— turned an eye upon him like a wild Indian, but cordial and full of smothered glee. "Your most exquisite reason!" was echoed on all sides; and A—— thought that B—— had now fairly entangled himself.

"Why, I cannot but think," retorted he of the wistful countenance, "that Guy Faux, that poor fluttering annual scare-crow of straw and rags, is an ill-used gentleman. I would give something to see him sitting pale and emaciated, surrounded by his matches and his barrels of gunpowder, and expecting the moment that was to transport him to Paradise for his heroic self-devotion; but if I say any more, there is that fellow G—— will make something of it. And as to Judas Iscariot, my reason is different. I would fain see the face of him, who, having dipped his hand in the same dish with the Son of Man, could afterwards betray him. I have no conception of such thing; nor have I ever seen any picture (not even Leonardo's very fine one) that gave me the least idea of it."—"You have said enough, Mr. B——, to justify your choice."

"Oh! ever right, Menenius,—ever right!"

"There is only one other person I can ever think of after this," continued H——; but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakspeare was to come into the room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of his garment!"

As a lady present seemed now to get uneasy at the turn the conversation had taken, we rose up to go. The morning broke with that dim, dubious light by which Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandaio must have seen to paint their

earliest works; and we parted to meet again and renew similar topics at night, the next night, and the night after that, till that night overspread Europe which saw no dawn. The same event, in truth, broke up our little Congress that broke up the great one. But that was to meet again: our deliberations have never been resumed.

ON NICKNAMES.

Hae nugae in seria ducunt.

This is a more important subject than it seems at first sight. It is as serious in its results as it is contemptible in the means by which those results are brought about. Nicknames for the most part govern the world. The history of politics, of religion, of literature, of morals, and of private life, is too often little less than the history of nicknames. What are half the convulsions of the civilised world, the frequent overthrow of states and kingdoms, the shock and hostile encounter of mighty continents, the battles by sea and land, the intestine commotions, the feuds of the Vitelli and Orsini, of the Guelphs and Gibellines, the civil wars in England, and the League in France, the jealousies and heart-burnings of cabinets and councils, the uncharitable proscriptions of creeds and sects, Turk, Jew, Pagan, Papist and Puritan, Quaker and Methodist,—the persecutions and massacres, the burnings, tortures, imprisonments, and lingering deaths inflicted for a different profession of faith,—but so many illustrations of the power of this principle? Fox's Book of Martyrs, and Neale's History of the Puritans, are comments on the same text.

The fires in Smithfield were fanned by nicknames, and a nickname set its seal on the unopened dungeons of the Holy Inquisition. Nicknames are the talismans and spells that collect and set in motion all the combustible part of men's passions and prejudices, which have hitherto played so much more successful a game, and done their work so much more effectually than reason, in all the grand concerns and petty details of human life, and do not yet seem tired of the task assigned them. Nicknames are the convenient

portable tools by which they simplify the process of mischief, and get through their job with the least time and trouble. These worthless, unmeaning, irritating, envenomed words of reproach are the established signs by which the different compartments of society are ticketted, labelled, and marked out for each other's hatred and contempt. They are to be had, ready cut and dry, of all sorts and sizes, wholesale and retail, for foreign exportation or home consumption, and for all occasions in life.

"The priest calls the lawyer a cheat, the lawyer beknaves the divine." The Frenchman hates the Englishman because he is an Englishman, and the Englishman hates the Frenchman for as good a reason. The Whig hates the Tory, and the Tory the Whig. The Dissenter hates the Church-of-England-man, and the Church-of-England-man hates the Dissenter, as if they were of different species, because they have a different designation. The Mussulman calls the worshipper of the Cross "Christian dog," spits in his face, and kicks him from the pavement, by virtue of a nickname; and the papist retorts the indignity upon the Infidel and the Jew by the same infallible rule of right. In France they damn Shakespear in the lump, by calling him a *barbare*; and we talk of Racine's *verbiage* with inexpressible contempt and self-complacency. Among ourselves, an anti-Jacobin critic denounces a Jacobin poet and his friends, at a venture, "as infidels and fugitives, who have left their wives destitute, and their children fatherless"—whether they have wives and children or not. The unenlightened savage makes a meal of his enemy's flesh, after reproaching him with the name of his tribe, because he is differently tattooed; and the literary cannibal cuts up the character of his opponent by the help of a nickname.

The jest of all this is, that a party nickname is always a relative term, and has its counter-sign, which has just the same force and meaning, so that both must be perfectly ridiculous and insignificant. A Whig implies a Tory; there must be "Malcontents" as well as "Malignants"; Jacobins and Anti-Jacobins; French and English. These

sort of *noms des guerres* derive all their force from their contraries. Take away the meaning of the one, and you take the sting out of the other. They could not exist but upon the strength of mutual and irreconcileable antipathies; there must be no love lost between them. What is there in the names themselves to give them a preference over each other? "Sound them, they do become the mouth as well; weigh them, they are as heavy; conjure with them, one will raise a spirit as soon as the other." If there were not fools and madmen who hated both, there could not be fools and madmen bigotted to either.

I have heard an eminent character boast that he had done more to produce the late war by nicknaming Buonaparte "the Corsican," than all the state-papers and documents on the subject put together. And yet Mr. Southey asks triumphantly, "Is it to be supposed that it is England, *our* England, to whom that war was owing?" As if, in a dispute between two countries, the conclusive argument which lies in the pronoun *our*, belonged only to one of them. I like Shakespear's version of the matter better:

> "Hath Britain all the sun that shines? day, night,
> Are they not but in Britain? I'th' world's volume
> *Our* Britain seems as of it, but not in it;
> In a great pool a swan's nest. Prithee think
> There's livers out of Britain."

In all national disputes, it is common to appeal to the numbers on your side as decisive on the point. If every body in England thought the late war right, every body in France thought it wrong. There were ten millions on one side of the question (or rather of the water), and thirty millions on the other side. That's all. I remember some one arguing, in justification of our ministers interfering on that occasion, "That governments would not go to war for nothing;" to which I answered, Then they could not go to war at all, for, at that rate, neither of them could be in the wrong, and yet both of them must be in the right, which was absurd.

The only meaning of these vulgar nicknames and party-

distinctions, where they are urged most violently and confidently, is, that others differ from you in some particular or other (whether it be opinion, dress, clime, complexion), which you highly disapprove of, forgetting, that, by the same rule, they have the very same right to be offended at you because you differ from them. Those who have reason on their side do not make the most obstinate and furious appeals to prejudice and abusive language.

I know but of one exception to this general rule, and that is, where the things that excite disgust are of such a kind that they cannot well be gone into without offence to decency and good manners; but it is equally certain in this case, that those who are most shocked at the things are not those who are most forward to apply the names. A person will not be fond of repeating a charge, or adverting to a subject, that inflicts a wound on his own feelings, even for the sake of wounding the feelings of another. A man should be very sure that he himself is not what he has always in his mouth. The greatest prudes have been often accounted the greatest hypocrites, and a satirist is at best but a suspicious character. The loudest and most unblushing invectives against vice and debauchery will as often proceed from a desire to inflame and pamper the passions of the writer, by raking into a nauseous subject, as from a wish to excite virtuous indignation against it in the public mind, or to reform the individual. To familiarise the mind to gross ideas is not the way to increase your own or the general repugnance to them. But, to return to the subject of nicknames.

The use of this figure of speech is, that it excites a strong idea without requiring any proof. It is a shorthand compendious mode of getting at a conclusion, and never troubling yourself or any body else with the formalities of reasoning or the dictates of common sense. It is superior to all evidence, for it does not rest upon any, and operates with the greatest force and certainty in proportion to the utter want of probability. Belief is only a strong impression, and the malignity or extravagance of the accusation passes for a proof of the crime.

"Brevity is the soul of wit"; and of all eloquence a nickname is the most concise, and of all arguments the most unanswerable. It gives *carte blanche* to the imagination, throws the reins on the neck of the passions, and suspends the use of the understanding altogether. It does not stand upon ceremony, on the nice distinctions of right and wrong. It does not wait the slow processes of reason, or stop to unravel the web of sophistry. It takes everything for granted that serves for nourishment for the spleen. It is instantaneous in its operations. There is nothing to interpose between the effect and it. It is passion without proof, and action without thought,—"the unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations." It does not, as Mr. Burke expresses it, "leave the will puzzled, undecided, and sceptical in the moment of action." It is a word and a blow.

"Bring but a Scotsman frae his hill,
Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,
Say such is royal George's will
And there's the foe,
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow."

The "No Popery" cry, raised a little while ago, let loose all the lurking spite and prejudice which had lain rankling in the proper receptacles for them for above a century, without any knowledge of the past history of the country which had given rise to them, or any reference to their connection with present circumstances; for the knowledge of the one would have prevented the possibility of their application to the other.

Facts present a tangible and definite idea to the mind, a train of causes and consequences, accounting for each other, and leading to a positive conclusion—but no farther. But a nickname is tied down to no such limited service; it is a disposable force, that is almost always perverted to mischief. It clothes itself with all the terrors of uncertain abstraction, and there is no end of the abuse to which it is liable but the cunning of those who employ, or the credulity of those who are gulled by it. It is a reserve of the

ignorance, bigotry, and intolerance of weak and vulgar minds, brought up where reason fails, and always ready, at a moment's warning, to be applied to any the most absurd purposes.

If you bring specific charges against a man, you thereby enable him to meet and repel them, if he thinks it worth his while; but a nickname baffles reply, by the very vagueness of the inferences from it, and gives increased activity to the confused, dim, and imperfect notions of dislike connected with it, from their having no settled ground to rest upon. The mind naturally irritates itself against an unknown object of fear or jealousy, and makes up for the blindness of its zeal by an excess of it. We are eager to indulge our hasty feelings to the utmost, lest, by stopping to examine, we should find that there is no excuse for them. The very consciousness of the injustice we may be doing another makes us only the more loud and bitter in our invectives against him. We keep down the admonitions of returning reason, by calling up a double portion of gratuitous and vulgar spite. The will may be said to act with most force *in vacuo*; the passions are the most ungovernable when they are blindfolded. That malignity is always the most implacable which is accompanied with a sense of weakness, because it is never satisfied of its own success or safety.

A nickname carries the weight of the pride, the indolence, the cowardice, the ignorance, and the ill-nature of mankind on its side. It acts, by mechanical sympathy, on the nerves of society. Any one who is without character himself may make himself master of the reputation of another by the application of a nickname, as, if you do not mind soiling your fingers, you may always throw dirt on another. No matter how undeserved the imputation, it will stick; for, though it is sport to the bye-standers to see you bespattered, they will not stop to see you wipe out the stains. You are not heard in your own defence; it has no effect, it does not tell, excites no sensation, or it is only felt as a disappointment of their triumph over you. Their passions and prejudices are inflamed by the charge, "as rage with

rage doth sympathize"; by vindicating yourself, you merely bring them back to common-sense, which is a very sober, mawkish state.

Give a dog a bad name, and hang him, is a proverb. "A nickname is the heaviest stone that the devil can throw at a man." It is a bugbear to the imagination, and, though we do not believe it, it still haunts our apprehensions. Let a nickname be industriously applied to our dearest friend, and let us know that it is ever so false and malicious, yet it will answer its end; it connects the person's name and idea with an ugly association, you think of them with pain together, or it requires an effort of indignation or magnanimity on your part to disconnect them; it becomes an uneasy subject, a sore point, and you will sooner desert your friend, or join in the conspiracy against him, than be constantly forced to repel charges without truth or meaning, and have your penetration or character called in question by a rascal. Nay, such is the unaccountable construction of language and of the human mind, that the affixing the most innocent or praise-worthy appellation to any individual or set of individuals, *as a nickname,* has all the effect of the most opprobrious epithets.

Thus the cant name "The Talents," was successfully applied as a stigma to the Whigs at one time; it held them up to ridicule, and made them obnoxious to public feeling, though it was notorious to every body that the Whig leaders were "the Talents," and that their adversaries nicknamed them so from real hatred and pretended derision. "The Party" is now substituted for "the Talents," since success has given their own set the monstrous affectation of being men of talents; and the poor Morning Chronicle is persecuted daily as the Party as it formerly stood the brunt (innocently enough) of all the abuse and sarcasms that were showered on the Talents.

Call a man short by his Christian name, as Tom or Dick such a one, or by his profession, (however respectable), as Canning pelted a noble lord with his left-off title of Doctor —and you undo him for ever, if he has a reputation to lose.

Such is the tenaciousness of spite and ill-nature, or the jealousy of public opinion, even this will be peg enough to hang doubtful inuendos, weighty dilemmas upon. "With so small a web as this will I catch so great a fly as Cassio." The public do not like to see their favourites treated with impertinent familiarity—it lowers the tone of admiration very speedily. It implies that some one stands in no great awe of their idol, and he perhaps may know as much about the matter as they do. It seems as if a man whose name, with some contemptuous abbreviation, is always dinned in the public ear, was distinguished by nothing else.

By repeating a man's name in this manner you may soon make him sick of it, and of his life too. Mr. Southey has by this time, I should suppose, a tolerable surfeit of his title of Laureate! Children do not like to be *called out of their names*. It is questioning their personal identity. A writer, who has made his vocabulary rich in nicknames (the late Editor of the Times), thought he had made a great acquisition to his stock, when it was pretended at one time that Bonaparte's real name was not Napoleon but Nicholas. He congratulated himself on this discovery, as a standing jest and a lasting triumph. Yet there was nothing in the name to signify. Nicolas Poussin was an instance of a great man in the last age; and in our own times, have we not Nicholas Vansittart?

The same writer has the merit of having carried this figure of speech as far as it would go. He fairly worried his readers into conviction by abuse and nicknames. People surrendered their judgments to escape the persecution of his style, and the disgust and indignation which his incessant violence and vulgarity excited, at last made you hate those who were the objects of it. *Causa causae causa causati*. He made people sick of a subject by making them sick of his arguments. Yet he attributed the effect he produced to the eloquence of his phraseology and the force of his reasonings!

A parrot may be taught to call names; and if the person who keeps the parrot has a spite to his neighbours, he may give them a great deal of annoyance without much wit,

either in the employer or the puppet. The insignificance of the instrument has nothing to do with the efficacy of the means. Hotspur would have had "a *starling* taught to repeat nothing but Mortimer," in the ears of his enemy. Nature, it is said, has given arms to all creatures the most proper to defend themselves, and annoy others: to the lowest she has given the use of nicknames.

There are some droll instances of the effect of proper names combined with circumstances. A young student had come up to London from Cambridge, and went in the evening and planted himself in the pit of the playhouse. He had not been seated long when, in one of the front boxes near him, he discovered one of his college tutors, with whom he felt an immediate and strong desire to claim acquaintance, and called out in a low and respectful voice, "Dr. Topping!" The appeal was, however, ineffectual. He then repeated in a louder tone, but still in an under key, so as not to excite the attention of any one but his friend, "Dr. Topping!" The Doctor took no notice. He then grew more impatient, and repeated "Dr. Topping, Dr. Topping!" two or three times pretty loud, to see whether the Doctor did not or would not hear him. Still the Doctor remained immovable. The joke began at length to get round, and one or two persons, as he continued his invocations of the Doctor's name, joined with him in them; these were reinforced by others calling out, "Dr. Topping! Dr. Topping!" on all sides, so that he could no longer avoid perceiving it, and at length the whole pit rose and roared, "Dr. Topping!" with loud and repeated cries, and the Doctor was forced to retire precipitately, frightened at the sound of his own name.

There is sometimes an inconvenience in common as well as uncommon names. On the night that Garrick took his leave of the stage, an inveterate playgoer could not get a seat in any part of the house. At length he went up into the gallery, but found that equally full with the rest. In this extremity a thought struck him, and he called out as loud as he could, "Mr. Smith, you're wanted. Your wife's taken suddenly ill, and you must go home immediately."

In an instant, half a dozen persons started up from different parts of the gallery to go out, and the gentleman took possession of the first place that offered. No doubt these persons would be disposed to quarrel with their names and their wives for some time after.

The calling people by their Christian or surnames is a proof of affection as well as of hatred. They are generally the best good fellows with whom their friends take this sort of liberty. *Diminutives* are titles of endearment. Dr. Johnson's calling Goldsmith "Goldy" did equal honour to both. It shewed the regard he had for him. This familiarity may perhaps imply a certain want of formal respect; but formal respect is not necessary to, if it is consistent with, cordial friendship.

Titles of honour are the reverse of nicknames,—they convey the idea of respect as the others do of contempt, and equally mean little or nothing. Junius's motto, *Stat nominis umbra,* is a very significant one: it might be extended farther. A striking instance of the force of names, standing by themselves, is in the respect felt towards Michael Angelo in this country. We know nothing of him but his name. It is an abstraction of fame and greatness. Our admiration of him supports itself, and our idea of his superiority seems self-evident, because it is attached to his name only. Some of our artists seem trying to puff their names into reputation from an instinctive knowledge of this principle,—by talking incessantly of themselves and doing nothing. It is not, indeed, easy to deny the merit of the works—which they do *not* produce. Those which they have produced are very bad.

ON GOING A JOURNEY.

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

> "The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

> —— "a friend in my retreat,
> Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

> "May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from town for awhile, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath

my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking !

It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like " sunken wrack and sumless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence.

No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do ; but I sometimes had rather be without them. " Leave, oh, leave me to my repose ! " I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me " very stuff of the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment ? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald ? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon ? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone.

I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. " Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others ; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that " he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts.

"Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said: but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature, without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomise them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet.

I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a beanfield crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humour.

Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recal a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation;

and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must " give it an understanding, but no tongue."

My old friend C——, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. " He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme ; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had " that fine madness in them which our first poets had " ; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following.

—— "Heer be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any ;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbours o'ergrown with woodbine, caves and dells ;
Choose where thou wilt, while I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers ; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies ;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."——

FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds : but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot :— I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects : it should be reserved for Table-talk. L—— is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors ; because he is the best within. I grant, there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey ; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it.

How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of night-fall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom ; and then after enquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to " take one's ease at one's inn ! " These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop : they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards.

What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet ! Sancho in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel ; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul este profani* !

These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk ; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place ; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn.

If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathise with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself.

But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits ; or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world : but your " unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine."

The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges— " lord of one's-self, uncumber'd with a name." Oh ! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour* ! One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture ; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world : an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society !

I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns— sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-common, where I found out the proof that like-

ness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read Paul and Virginia, which I picked up at an inn in Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day ; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's Camilla.

It was on the tenth of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the New Eloise, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bonne bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birth-day, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham ; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them.

The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems !

But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make

them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was.

I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly any thing that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight, also blots it from our memory like a dream.

In travelling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the

country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank.

The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population, known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piece-meal.

In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten!—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion

antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to : in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey.

I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

"With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd"—

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian ; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to common-place beauties in matchless pictures.

As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen : there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech ; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.

Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and

wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!

There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else: but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connexions. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated.

Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings, "Out of my country and myself I go." Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recal them: but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could any where borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

WHY DISTANT OBJECTS PLEASE.

Distant objects please, because, in the first place, they imply an idea of space and magnitude, and because, not being obtruded too close upon the eye, we clothe them with the indistinct and airy colours of fancy. In looking at the misty mountain-tops that bound the horizon, the mind is as it were conscious of all the conceivable objects and interests that lie between ; we imagine all sorts of adventures in the interim ; strain our hopes and wishes to reach the air-drawn circle, or to " descry new lands, rivers, and mountains," stretching far beyond it : our feelings carried out of themselves lose their grossness and their husk, are rarefied, expanded, melt into softness and brighten into beauty, turning to ethereal mould, sky-tinctured. We drink the air before us, and borrow a more refined existence from objects that hover on the brink of nothing. Where the landscape fades from the dull sight, we fill the thin, viewless space with shapes of unknown good, and tinge the hazy prospect with hopes and wishes and more charming fears.

> " But thou oh Hope ! with eyes so fair,
> What was thy delighted measure?
> Still it whisper'd promised pleasure,
> And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail ! "

Whatever is placed beyond the reach of sense and knowledge, whatever is imperfectly discerned, the fancy pieces out at its leisure ; and all but the present moment, but the present spot, passion claims for its own, and brooding over it with wings outspread, stamps it with an image of itself. Passion is lord of infinite space, and distant objects please because they border on its confines, and are moulded by its touch. When I was a boy, I lived within sight of a range

of lofty hills, whose blue tops blending with the setting sun had often tempted my longing eyes and wandering feet. At last I put my project in execution, and on a nearer approach, instead of glimmering air woven into fantastic shapes, found them huge lumpish heaps of discoloured earth. I learnt from this (in part) to leave "Yarrow unvisited," and not idly to disturb a dream of good!

Distance of time has much the same effect as distance of place. It is not surprising that fancy colours the prospect of the future as it thinks good, when it even effaces the forms of memory. Time takes out the sting of pain; our sorrows after a certain period have been so often steeped in a medium of thought and passion, that they "unmould their essence;" and all that remains of our original impressions is what we would wish them to have been. Not only the untried steep ascent before us, but the rude, unsightly masses of our past experience presently resume their power of deception over the eye: the golden cloud soon rests upon their heads, and the purple light of fancy clothes their barren sides! Thus we pass on, while both ends of our existence touch upon Heaven!

There is (so to speak) "a mighty stream of tendency" to good in the human mind, upon which all objects float and are imperceptibly borne along: and though in the voyage of life we meet with strong rebuffs, with rocks and quicksands, yet there is "a tide in the affairs of men," a heaving and a restless aspiration of the soul, by means of which, "with sails and tackle torn," the wreck and scattered fragments of our entire being drift into the port and haven of our desires! In all that relates to the affections, we put the will for the deed:—so that the instant the pressure of unwelcome circumstances is removed, the mind recoils from their hold, recovers its elasticity, and re-unites itself to that image of good, which is but a reflection and configuration of its own nature. Seen in the distance, in the long perspective of waning years, the meanest incidents, enlarged and enriched by countless recollections, become interesting; the most painful, broken and softened by time, soothe. How any object, that unexpectedly brings

back to us old scenes and associations, startles the mind! what a yearning it creates within us; what a longing to leap the intermediate space! How fondly we cling to, and try to revive the impression of all that we then were!

"Such tricks hath strong imagination!"

In truth, we impose upon ourselves, and know not what we wish. It is a cunning artifice, a quaint delusion, by which, in pretending to be what we were at a particular moment of time, we would fain be all that we have since been, and have our lives to come over again. It is not the little, glimmering, almost annihilated speck in the distance, that rivets our attention and "hangs upon the beatings of our hearts": it is the interval that separates us from it, and of which it is the trembling boundary, that excites all this coil and mighty pudder in the breast. Into that great gap in our being "come thronging soft desires" and infinite regrets. It is the contrast, the change from what we then were, that arms the half-extinguished recollection with its giant-strength, and lifts the fabric of the affections from its shadowy base. In contemplating its utmost verge, we overlook the map of our existence, and re-tread, in apprehension, the journey of life. So it is that in early youth we strain our eager sight after the pursuits of manhood; and, as we are sliding off the stage, strive to gather up the toys and flowers that pleased our thoughtless childhood.

When I was quite a boy, my father used to take me to the Montpelier Tea-gardens at Walworth. Do I go there now? No; the place is deserted, and its borders and its beds o'erturned. Is there, then, nothing that can

"Bring back the hour
Of glory in the grass, of splendour in the flower?"

Oh! yes. I unlock the casket of memory, and draw back the warders of the brain; and there this scene of my infant wanderings still lives unfaded, or with fresher dyes. A new sense comes upon me, as in a dream; a richer perfume, brighter colours start out; my eyes dazzle; my heart heaves with its new load of bliss, and I am a child again.

My sensations are all glossy, spruce, voluptuous, and fine: they wear a candied coat, and are in holiday trim.

I see the beds of larkspur with purple eyes ; tall holy-oaks, red and yellow ; the broad sun-flowers, caked in gold, with bees buzzing round them ; wildernesses of pinks, and hot-glowing pionies ; poppies run to seed ; the sugared lily, and faint mignionette, all ranged in order, and as thick as they can grow ; the box-tree borders ; the gravel-walks, the painted alcove, the confectionary, the clotted cream :— I think I see them now with sparkling looks ; or have they vanished while I have been writing this description of them ? No matter : they will return again when I least think of them. All that I have observed since, of flowers and plants, and grass-plots, and of suburb delights, seems, to me, borrowed from " that first garden of my innocence " —to be slips and scions stolen from that bed of memory. In this manner the darlings of our childhood burnish out in the eye of after-years, and derive their sweetest perfume from the first heartfelt sigh of pleasure breathed upon them,

> —" like the sweet south,
> That breathes upon a bank of violets,
> Stealing and giving odour ! "

If I have pleasure in a flower-garden, I have in a kitchen-garden too, and for the same reason. If I see a row of cabbage-plants or of peas or beans coming up, I immediately think of those which I used so carefully to water of an evening at W——m, when my day's tasks were done, and of the pain with which I saw them droop and hang down their leaves in the morning's sun. Again, I never see a child's kite in the air, but it seems to pull at my heart. It is to me a " thing of life." I feel the twinge at my elbow, the flutter and palpitation, with which I used to let go the string of my own, as it rose in the air and towered among the clouds. My little cargo of hopes and fears ascended with it ; and as it made a part of my own consciousness then, it does so still, and appears " like some gay creature of the element," my playmate when life was young, and twin-born with my earliest recollections. I could enlarge on this subject of childish amusements, but Mr. Leigh Hunt has treated it so well, in a paper in the *Indicator*, on the productions of the toy-shops of the metropolis, that if I

were to insist more on it, I should only pass for an imitator of that ingenious and agreeable writer, *and for an indifferent one into the bargain.*

Sounds, smells, and sometimes tastes, are remembered longer than visible objects, and serve, perhaps, better for links in the chain of association. The reason seems to be this : they are in their nature intermittent, and comparatively rare ; whereas objects of sight are always before us, and, by their continuous succession, drive one another out. The eye is always open ; and between any given impression and its recurrence a second time, fifty thousand other impressions have, in all likelihood, been stamped upon the sense and on the brain. The other senses are not so active or vigilant. They are but seldom called into play. The ear, for example, is oftener courted by silence than noise ; and the sounds that break that silence sink deeper and more durably into the mind. I have a more present and lively recollection of certain scents, tastes, and sounds, for this reason, than I have of mere visible images, because they are more original, and less worn by frequent repetition.

Where there is nothing interposed between any two impressions, whatever the distance of time that parts them, they naturally seem to touch ; and the renewed impression recals the former one in full force, without distraction or competitor. The taste of barberries, which have hung out in the snow during the severity of a North American winter, I have in my mouth still, after an interval of thirty years ; for I have met with no other taste, in all that time, at all like it. It remains by itself, almost like the impression of a sixth sense. But the colour is mixed up indiscriminately with the colours of many other berries, nor should I be able to distinguish it among them.

The smell of a brick-kiln carries the evidence of its own identity with it : neither is it to me (from peculiar associations) unpleasant. The colour of brick-dust, on the contrary, is more common, and easily confounded with other colours. Raphael did not keep it quite distinct from his flesh-colour. I will not say that we have a more perfect recollection of the human voice than of that complex

picture the human face, but I think the sudden hearing of a well-known voice has something in it more affecting and striking than the sudden meeting with the face : perhaps, indeed, this may be because we have a more familiar remembrance of the one than the other, and the voice takes us more by surprise on that account.

I am by no means certain (generally speaking) that we have the ideas of the other senses so accurate and well-made out as those of visible form : what I chiefly mean is, that the feelings belonging to the sensations of our other organs, when accidentally recalled, are kept more separate and pure. Musical sounds, probably, owe a good deal of their interest and romantic effect to the principle here spoken of. Were they constant, they would become indifferent, as we may find with respect to disagreeable noises, which we do not hear after a time. I know no situation more pitiable than that of a blind fiddler, who has but one sense left (if we except the sense of snuff-taking*) and who has that stunned or deafened by his own villanous noises. Shakespear says,

" How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night ! "

It has been observed, in explanation of this passage, that it is because in the day-time lovers are occupied with one another's faces, but that at night they can only distinguish the sound of each other's voices. I know not how this may be : but I have, ere now, heard a voice break so upon the silence,

" To angels' 'twas most like,"

and charm the moonlight air with its balmy essence, that the budding leaves trembled to its accents. Would I might have heard it once more whisper peace and hope (as erst when it was mingled with the breath of spring), and with its soft pulsations lift winged fancy to heaven ! But it has ceased, or turned where I no more shall hear it !—Hence, also, we see what is the charm of the shepherd's pastoral

* See Wilkie's Blind Fiddler.

reed ; and why we hear him, as it were, piping to his flock, even in a picture. Our ears are fancy-stung !

I remember once strolling along the margin of a stream, skirted with willows and plashy sedges, in one of those low sheltered valleys on Salisbury Plain, where the monks of former ages had planted chapels and built hermits' cells. There was a little parish-church near, but tall elms and quivering alders hid it from my sight, when, all of a sudden, I was startled by the sound of the full organ pealing on the ear, accompanied by rustic voices and the willing quire of village-maids and children. It rose, indeed, " like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumes." The dew from a thousand pastures was gathered in its softness; the silence of a thousand years spoke in it. It came upon the heart like the calm beauty of death : fancy caught the sound, and faith mounted on it to the skies. It filled the valley like a mist, and still poured out its endless chant, and still it swells upon the ear, and wraps me in a golden trance, drowning the noisy tumult of the world !

There is a curious and interesting discussion, on the comparative distinctness of our visual and other external impressions, in Mr. Fearn's Essay on Consciousness, with which I shall try to descend from this rhapsody to the ground of common sense and plain reasoning again. After observing, a little before, that " nothing is more untrue than that sensations of vision do necessarily leave more vivid and durable ideas than those of grosser senses," he proceeds to give a number of illustrations in support of this position. " Notwithstanding," he says, " the advantages here enumerated in favour of sight, I think there is no doubt that a man will come to forget acquaintance, and many other visible objects, noticed in mature age, before he will in the least forget tastes and smells, of only moderate interest, encountered either in his childhood, or at any time since.

" In the course of voyaging to various distant regions, it has several times happened that I have eaten once or twice of different things that never came in my way before nor since. Some of these have been pleasant, and some scarce

better than insipid; but I have no reason to think I have forgot, or much altered the ideas left by those single impulses of taste; though here the memory of them certainly has not been preserved by repetition. It is clear I must have seen, as well as tasted those things; and I am decided that I remember the tastes with more precision than I do the visual sensations.

"I remember having once, and only once, eat Kangaroo in New Holland; and having once smelled a baker's shop, having a peculiar odour, in the city of Bassorah. Now both these gross ideas remain with me quite as vivid as any visual idea of those places; and this could not be from repetition, but really from interest in the sensation.

"Twenty-eight years ago, in the island of Jamaica, I partook (perhaps twice) of a certain fruit, of the taste of which I have now a very fresh idea; and I could add other instances of that period.

"I have had repeated proofs of having lost retention of visual objects, at various distances of time, though they had once been familiar. I have not, during thirty years, forgot the delicate, and in itself most trifling sensation, that the palm of my hand used to convey, when I was a boy, trying the different effects of what boys call *light* and *heavy* tops; but I cannot remember within several shades of the brown coat which I left off a week ago. If any man thinks he can do better, let him take an ideal survey of his wardrobe, and then actually refer to it for proof.

"After retention of such ideas, it certainly would be very difficult to persuade me that feeling, taste, and smell can scarce be said to leave ideas, unless indistinct and obscure ones . . .

"Shew a Londoner correct models of twenty London churches, and, at the same time a model of each, which differs, in several considerable features, from the truth, and I venture to say he shall not tell you, in any instance, which is the correct one, except by mere chance.

"If he is an architect, he may be much more correct than any ordinary person: and this obviously is, because he has felt an interest in viewing these structures, which

an ordinary person does not feel : and here interest is the sole reason of his remembering more correctly than his neighbour.

" I once heard a person quaintly ask another, How many trees there are in St. Paul's churchyard? The question itself indicates that many cannot answer it ; and this is found to be the case with those who have passed the church an hundred times : whilst the cause is, that every individual in the busy stream which glides past St. Paul's is engrossed in various other interests.

" How often does it happen that we enter a well-known apartment, or meet a well-known friend, and receive some vague idea of visible difference, but cannot possibly find our *what* it is ; until at length we come to perceive (or perhaps must be told) that some ornament or furniture is removed, altered, or added in the apartment ; or that our friend has cut his hair, taken a wig, or has made any of twenty considerable alterations in his appearance. At other times, we have no perception of alteration whatever, though the like has taken place.

" It is, however, certain, that sight, apposited with interest, can retain tolerably exact copies of sensations, especially if not too complex ; such as one of the human countenance and figure. Yet the voice will convince us, when the countenance will not : and he is reckoned an excellent painter, and no ordinary genius, who can make a tolerable likeness from memory. Nay, more, it is a conspicuous proof of the inaccuracy of visual ideas, that it is an effort of consummate art, attained by many years' practice, to take a strict likeness of the human countenance, even when the object is present ; and among those cases, where the wilful cheat of flattery has been avoided, we still find in how very few instances the best painters produce a likeness up to the life, though practice and interest join in the attempt.

" I imagine an ordinary person would find it very difficult supposing he had some knowledge of drawing, to afford, from memory, a tolerable sketch of such a familiar object as his curtain, his carpet, or his dressing-gown, if the

pattern of either be at all various or irregular ; yet he will instantly tell, with precision, either if his snuff or his wine has not the same character it had yesterday, though both these are compounds.

" Beyond all this, I may observe, that a draper, who is in the daily habit of such comparisons, cannot carry in his mind the particular shade of a colour during a second of time ; and has no certainty of tolerably matching two simple colours, except by placing the patterns in contact." —*Essay on Consciousness*, p. 303.

I will conclude the subject of this Essay with observing, that (as it appears to me) a nearer and more familiar acquaintance with persons has a different and more favourable effect than that with places or things. The latter improve (as an almost universal rule) by being removed to a distance : the former, generally at least, gain by being brought nearer and more home to us. Report or imagination seldom raises any individual so high in our estimation as to disappoint us greatly when we are introduced to him : prejudice and malice constantly exaggerate defects beyond the reality. Ignorance alone makes monsters or bugbears : our actual acquaintances are all very common-place people.

The thing is, that as a matter of hearsay or conjecture, we make abstractions of particular vices, and irritate ourselves against some particular quality or action of the person we dislike :—whereas, individuals are concrete existences, not arbitrary denominations or nicknames ; and have innumerable other qualities, good, bad, and indifferent, besides the damning feature with which we fill up the portrait or caricature, in our previous fancies. We can scarcely hate any one that we know. An acute observer complained, that if there was any one to whom he had a particular spite, and a wish to let him see it, the moment he came to sit down with him, his enmity was disarmed by some unforeseen circumstance. If it was a Quarterly Reviewer, he was in other respects like any other man. Suppose, again, your adversary turns out a very ugly man, or wants an eye, you are baulked in that way :—he is not what you expected, the object of your abstract hatred and

implacable disgust. He may be a very disagreeable person, but he is no longer the same.

If you come into a room where a man is, you find, in general, that he has a nose upon his face. "There's sympathy," ! This alone is a diversion to your unqualified contempt. He is stupid, and says nothing, but he seems to have something in him when he laughs. You had conceived of him as a rank Whig or Tory—yet he talks upon other subjects. You knew that he was a virulent party-writer ; but you find that the man himself is a tame sort of animal enough. He does not bite. That's something. In short, you can make nothing of it. Even opposite vices balance one another. A man may be pert in company, but he is also dull ; so that you cannot, though you try, hate him cordially, merely for the wish to be offensive. He is a knave. Granted. You learn, on a nearer acquaintance, what you did not know before—that he is a fool as well ; so you forgive him. On the other hand, he may be a profligate public character, and may make no secret of it ; but he gives you a hearty shake by the hand, speaks kindly to servants, and supports an aged father and mother. Politics apart, he is a very honest fellow.

You are told that a person has carbuncles on his face ; but you have ocular proofs that he is sallow, and pale as a ghost. This does not much mend the matter ; but it blunts the edge of the ridicule, and turns your indignation against the inventor of the lie ; but he is——, the editor of a Scotch magazine, so you are just where you were. I am not very fond of anonymous criticism ; I want to know who the author can be : but the moment I learn this, I am satisfied. Even —— would do well to come out of his disguise. It is the mask only that we dread and hate : the man may have something human about him ! The notions, in short, which we entertain of people at a distance, or from partial representations, or from guess-work, are simple, uncompounded ideas, which answer to nothing in reality ; those which we derive from experience are mixed modes, the only true, and, in general, the most favourable ones. Instead of naked deformity, or abstract perfection—

"Those faultless monsters which the world ne'er saw,"—

"the web of our lives is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipt them not; and our vices would despair, if they were not encouraged by our virtues." This was truly and finely said long ago, by one who knew the strong and weak points of human nature: but it is what sects, and parties, and those philosophers whose pride and boast it is to classify by nicknames, have yet to learn the meaning of!

THE INDIAN JUGGLERS.

Coming forward and seating himself on the ground in his white dress and tightened turban, the chief of the Indian Jugglers begins with tossing up two brass balls, which is what any of us could do, and concludes with keeping up four at the same time, which is what none of us could do to save our lives, nor if we were to take our whole lives to do it in. Is it then a trifling power we see at work, or is it not something next to miraculous? It is the utmost stretch of human ingenuity, which nothing but the bending the faculties of body and mind to it from the tenderest infancy with incessant, ever-anxious application up to manhood, can accomplish or make even a slight approach to.

Man, thou art a wonderful animal, and thy ways past finding out! Thou canst do strange things, but thou turnest them to little account!—To conceive of this effort of extraordinary dexterity distracts the imagination and makes admiration breathless. Yet it costs nothing to the performer, any more than if it were a mere mechanical deception with which he had nothing to do but to watch and laugh at the astonishment of the spectators. A single error of a hair's-breadth, of the smallest conceivable portion of time, would be fatal: the precision of the movements must be like a mathematical truth, their rapidity is like lightning.

To catch four balls in succession in less than a second of time, and deliver them back so as to return with seeming consciousness to the hand again, to make them revolve round him at certain intervals like the planets in their spheres, to make them chase one another like sparkles of fire, or shoot up like flowers or meteors, to throw them behind his back and twine them round his neck like ribbons or like serpents, to do what appears an impossibility, and to do it with all the ease, the grace, the carelessness im-

aginable, to laugh at, to play with the glittering mockeries, to follow them with his eye as if he could fascinate them with its lambent fire, or as if he had only to see that they kept time with the music on the stage—there is something in all this which he who does not admire may be quite sure he never really admired any thing in the whole course of his life.

It is skill surmounting difficulty, and beauty triumphing over skill. It seems as if the difficulty once mastered naturally resolved itself into ease and grace, and as if to be overcome at all, it must be overcome without an effort. The smallest awkwardness or want of pliancy or self-possession would stop the whole process. It is the work of witchcraft, and yet sport for children.

Some of the other feats are quite as curious and wonderful, such as the balancing the artificial tree and shooting a bird from each branch through a quill; though none of them have the elegance or facility of the keeping up of the brass balls. You are in pain for the result, and glad when the experiment is over; they are not accompanied with the same unmixed, unchecked delight as the former; and I would not give much to be merely astonished without being pleased at the same time. As to the swallowing of the sword, the police ought to interfere to prevent it. When I saw the Indian Juggler do the same things before, his feet were bare, and he had large rings on the toes, which kept turning round all the time of the performance, as if they moved of themselves.

The hearing a speech in Parliament, drawled or stammered out by the Honourable Member or the Noble Lord, the ringing the changes on their common-places, which any one could repeat after them as well as they, stirs me not a jot, shakes not my good opinion of myself: but the seeing the Indian Jugglers does. It makes me ashamed of myself. I ask what there is that I can do as well as this? Nothing. What have I been doing all my life? Have I been idle, or have I nothing to shew for all my labour and pains? Or have I passed my time in pouring words like water into empty sieves, rolling a stone up a hill and then

down again, trying to prove an argument in the teeth of facts, and looking for causes in the dark, and not finding them? Is there no one thing in which I can challenge competition, that I can bring as an instance of exact perfection, in which others cannot find a flaw?

The utmost I can pretend to is to write a description of what this fellow can do. I can write a book: so can many others who have not even learned to spell. What abortions are these Essays! What errors, what ill-pieced transitions, what crooked reasons, what lame conclusions! How little is made out, and that little how ill! Yet they are the best I can do. I endeavour to recollect all I have ever observed or thought upon a subject, and to express it as nearly as I can. Instead of writing on four subjects at a time, it is as much as I can manage to keep the thread of one discourse clear and unentangled. I have also time on my hands to correct my opinions, and polish my periods: but the one I cannot, and the other I will not do.

I am fond of arguing: yet with a good deal of pains and practice it is often as much as I can do to beat my man; though he may be a very indifferent hand. A common fencer would disarm his adversary in the twinkling of an eye, unless he were a professor like himself. A stroke of wit will sometimes produce this effect, but there is no such power or superiority in sense or reasoning. There is no complete mastery of execution to be shewn there: and you hardly know the professor from the impudent pretender or the mere clown*.

* The celebrated Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot) first discovered and brought out the talents of the late Mr. Opie, the painter. He was a poor Cornish boy, and was out at work in the fields, when the poet went in search of him. "Well, my lad, can you go and bring me your very best picture?" The other flew like lightning, and soon came back with what he considered as his master-piece. The stranger looked at it, and the young artist, after waiting some time without his giving any opinion, at length exclaimed eagerly, "Well, what do you think of it?"—"Think of it?" said Wolcot, "why I think you ought to be ashamed of it—that you who might do so well, do no better!" The same answer would have applied to this artist's latest performances, that had been suggested by one of his earliest efforts.

I have always had this feeling of the inefficacy and slow progress of intellectual compared to mechanical excellence, and it has always made me somewhat dissatisfied. It is a great many years since I saw Richer, the famous rope-dancer, perform at Sadler's Wells. He was matchless in his art, and added to his extraordinary skill exquisite ease, and unaffected natural grace. I was at that time employed in copying a half-length picture of Sir Joshua Reynolds's; and it put me out of conceit with it. How ill this part was made out in the drawing! How heavy, how slovenly this other was painted! I could not help saying to myself, "If the rope-dancer had performed his task in this manner, leaving so many gaps and botches in his work, he would have broke his neck long ago; I should never have seen that vigorous elasticity of nerve and precision of movement!"

Is it then so easy an undertaking (comparatively) to dance on a tight-rope? Let any one, who thinks so, get up and try. There is the thing. It is that which at first we cannot do at all, which in the end is done to such perfection. To account for this in some degree, I might observe that mechanical dexterity is confined to doing some one particular thing, which you can repeat as often as you please, in which you know whether you succeed or fail, and where the point of perfection consists in succeeding in a given undertaking.

In mechanical efforts, you improve by perpetual practice, and you do so infallibly, because the object to be attained is not a matter of taste or fancy or opinion, but of actual experiment, in which you must either do the thing or not do it. If a man is put to aim at a mark with a bow and arrow, he must hit it or miss it, that's certain. He cannot deceive himself, or go on shooting wide or falling short, and still fancy that he is making progress. The distinction between right and wrong, between true and false, is here palpable; and he must either correct his aim or persevere in his error with his eyes open, for which there is neither excuse nor temptation.

If a man is learning to dance on a rope, if he does not

mind what he is about, he will break his neck. After that, it will be in vain for him to argue that he did not make a false step. His situation is not like that of Goldsmith's pedagogue.—

> "In argument they own'd his wondrous skill,
> And e'en though vanquish'd, he could argue still."

Danger is a good teacher, and makes apt scholars. So are disgrace, defeat, exposure to immediate scorn and laughter. There is no opportunity in such cases for self-delusion, no idling time away, no being off your guard (or you must take the consequences)—neither is there any room for humour or caprice or prejudice.

If the Indian Juggler were to play tricks in throwing up the three case-knives, which keep their positions like the leaves of a crocus in the air, he would cut his fingers. I can make a very bad antithesis without cutting my fingers. The tact of style is more ambiguous than that of double-edged instruments. If the Juggler were told that by flinging himself under the wheels of the Jaggernaut, when the idol issues forth on a gaudy day, he would immediately be transported into Paradise, he might believe it, and nobody could disprove it. So the Brahmins may say what they please on that subject, may build up dogmas and mysteries without end, and not be detected : but their ingenious countrymen cannot persuade the frequenters of the Olympic Theatre that he performs a number of astonishing feats without actually giving proofs of what he says.

There is then in this sort of manual dexterity, first a gradual aptitude acquired to a given exertion of muscular power, from constant repetition, and in the next place, an exact knowledge how much is still wanting and necessary to be supplied. The obvious test is to increase the effort or nicety of the operation, and still to find it come true. The muscles ply instinctively to the dictates of habit. Certain movements and impressions of the hand and eye, having been repeated together an infinite number of times, are unconsciously but unavoidably cemented into closer and closer union ; the limbs require little more than to be

put in motion for them to follow a regular track with ease and certainty; so that the mere intention of the will acts mathematically, like touching the spring of a machine, and you come with Locksley in Ivanhoe, in shooting at a mark, "to allow for the wind."

Farther, what is meant by perfection in mechanical exercises is the performing certain feats to a uniform nicety, that is, in fact, undertaking no more than you can perform. You task yourself, the limit you fix is optional, and no more than human industry and skill can attain to: but you have no abstract, independent standard of difficulty or excellence (other than the extent of your own powers). Thus he who can keep up four brass balls does this *to perfection*; but he cannot keep up five at the same instant, and would fail every time he attempted it. That is, the mechanical performer undertakes to emulate himself, not to equal another*.

But the artist undertakes to imitate another, or to do what nature has done, and this it appears is more difficult, *viz.* to copy what she has set before us in the face of nature or "human face divine," entire and without a blemish, than to keep up four brass balls at the same instant; for the one is done by the power of human skill and industry, and the other never was nor will be. Upon the whole, therefore, I have more respect for Reynolds, than I have for Richer; for, happen how it will, there have been more people in the world who could dance on a rope like the one than who could paint like Sir Joshua.

The latter was but a bungler in his profession to the other, it is true; but then he had a harder task-master to obey, whose will was more wayward and obscure, and whose instructions it was more difficult to practice. You can put a child apprentice to a tumbler or rope-dancer with a comfortable prospect of success, if they are but sound of wind and limb: but you cannot do the same thing in painting. The odds are a million to one. You may make indeed as many H——s and H——s, as you put into that sort of machine, but not one Reynolds amongst them all,

* If two persons play against each other at any game, one of them necessarily fails.

with his grace, his grandeur, his blandness of *gusto*, "in tones and gestures hit," unless you could make the man over again.

To snatch this grace beyond the reach of art is then the height of art—where fine art begins, and where mechanical skill ends. The soft suffusion of the soul, the speechless breathing eloquence, the looks "commercing with the skies," the ever-shifting forms of an eternal principle, that which is seen but for a moment, but dwells in the heart always, and is only seized as it passes by strong and secret sympathy, must be taught by nature and genius, not by rules or study. It is suggested by feeling, not by laborious microscopic inspection: in seeking for it without, we lose the harmonious clue to it within: and in aiming to grasp the substance, we let the very spirit of art evaporate. In a word, the objects of fine art are not the objects of sight but as these last are the objects of taste and imagination, that is, as they appeal to the sense of beauty, of pleasure, and of power in the human breast, and are explained by that finer sense, and revealed in their inner structure to the eye in return.

Nature is also a language. Objects, like words, have a meaning; and the true artist is the interpreter of this language, which he can only do by knowing its application to a thousand other objects in a thousand other situations. Thus the eye is too blind a guide of itself to distinguish between the warm or cold tone of a deep blue sky, but another sense acts as a monitor to it, and does not err. The colour of the leaves in autumn would be nothing without the feeling that accompanies it; but it is that feeling that stamps them on the canvas, faded, seared, blighted, shrinking from the winter's flaw, and makes the sight as true as touch—

> "And visions, as poetic eyes avow,
> Cling to each leaf and hang on every bough."

The more ethereal, evanescent, more refined and sublime part of art is the seeing nature through the medium of sentiment and passion, as each object is a symbol of the

affections and a link in the chain of our endless being. But the unravelling this mysterious web of thought and feeling is alone in the Muse's gift, namely, in the power of that trembling sensibility which is awake to every change and every modification of its ever-varying impressions, that

"Thrills in each nerve, and lives along the line."

This power is indifferently called genius, imagination, feeling, taste; but the manner in which it acts upon the mind can neither be defined by abstract rules, as is the case in science, nor verified by continual unvarying experiments, as is the case in mechanical performances. The mechanical excellence of the Dutch painters in colouring and handling is that which comes the nearest in fine art to the perfection of certain manual exhibitions of skill. The truth of the effect and the facility with which it is produced are equally admirable. Up to a certain point, everything is faultless. The hand and eye have done their part. There is only a want of taste and genius. It is after we enter upon that enchanted ground that the human mind begins to droop and flag as in a strange road, or in a thick mist, benighted and making little way with many attempts and many failures, and that the best of us only escape with half a triumph. The undefined and the imaginary are the regions that we must pass like Satan, difficult and doubtful, "half flying, half on foot." The object in sense is a positive thing, and execution comes with practice.

Cleverness is a certain *knack* or aptitude at doing certain things, which depend more on a particular adroitness and off-hand readiness than on force or perseverance, such as making puns, making epigrams, making extempore verses, mimicking the company, mimicking a style, &c. Cleverness is either liveliness or smartness, or something answering to *sleight of hand*, like letting a glass fall sideways off a table, or else a trick, like knowing the secret spring of a watch.

Accomplishments are certain external graces, which are to be learnt from others, and which are easily displayed to the admiration of the beholder, *viz.* dancing, riding, fencing,

music, and so on. These ornamental acquirements are only proper to those who are at ease in mind and fortune.

I know an individual who if he had been born to an estate of five thousand a year, would have been the most accomplished gentleman of the age. He would have been the delight and envy of the circle in which he moved—would have graced by his manners the liberality flowing from the openness of his heart, would have laughed with the women, have argued with the men, have said good things and written agreeable ones, have taken a hand at piquet or the lead at the harpsichord, and have set and sung his own verses—*nugae canorae*—with tenderness and spirit; a Rochester without the vice, a modern Surrey! As it is, all these capabilities of excellence stand in his way. He is too versatile for a professional man, not dull enough for a political drudge, too gay to be happy, too thoughtless to be rich. He wants the enthusiasm of the poet, the severity of the prose-writer, and the application of the man of business.

Talent is the capacity of doing any thing that depends on application and industry, such as writing a criticism, making a speech, studying the law. Talent differs from genius, as voluntary differs from involuntary power. Ingenuity is genius in trifles, greatness is genius in undertakings of much pith and moment. A clever or ingenious man is one who can do any thing well, whether it is worth doing or not: a great man is one who can do that which when done is of the highest importance. Themistocles said he could not play on the flute, but that he could make of a small city a great one. This gives one a pretty good idea of the distinction in question.

Greatness is great power, producing great effects. It is not enough that a man has great power in himself, he must shew it to all the world in a way that cannot be hid or gainsaid. He must fill up a certain idea in the public mind. I have no other notion of greatness than this two-fold definition, great results springing from great inherent energy. The great in visible objects has relation to that which extends over space: the great in mental ones has to do

with space and time. No man is truly great, who is great only in his life-time.

The test of greatness is the page of history. Nothing can be said to be great that has a distinct limit, or that borders on something evidently greater than itself. Besides, what is short-lived and pampered into mere notoriety, is of a gross and vulgar quality in itself. A Lord Mayor is hardly a great man. A city orator or patriot of the day only shew, by reaching the height of their wishes, the distance they are at from any true ambition.

Popularity is neither fame nor greatness. A king (as such) is not a great man. He has great power, but it is not his own. He merely wields the lever of the state, which a child, an idiot, or a madman can do. It is the office, not the man we gaze at. Any one else in the same situation would be just as much an object of abject curiosity. We laugh at the country girl who having seen a king expressed her disappointment by saying, " Why, he is only a man ! " Yet, knowing this, we run to see a king as if he was something more than a man.

To display the greatest powers, unless they are applied to great purposes, makes nothing for the character of greatness. To throw a barley-corn through the eye of a needle, to multiply nine figures by nine in the memory, argues infinite dexterity of body and capacity of mind, but nothing comes of either. There is a surprising power at work, but the effects are not proportionate, or such as take hold of the imagination.

To impress the idea of power on others, they must be made in some way to feel it. It must be communicated to their understandings in the shape of an increase of knowledge, or it must subdue and overawe them by subjecting their wills. Admiration, to be solid and lasting, must be founded on proofs from which we have no means of escaping ; it is neither a slight nor a voluntary gift. A mathematician who solves a profound problem, a poet who creates an image of beauty in the mind that was not there before, imparts knowledge and power to others, in which his greatness and his fame consists, and on which it reposes.

Jedediah Buxton will be forgotten; but Napier's bones will live.

Lawgivers, philosophers, founders of religion, conquerors and heroes, inventors and great geniuses in arts and sciences, are great men; for they are great public benefactors, or formidable scourges to mankind. Among ourselves, Shakespear, Newton, Bacon, Milton, Cromwell, were great men; for they shewed great power by acts and thoughts, which have not yet been consigned to oblivion. They must needs be men of lofty stature, whose shadows lengthen out to remote posterity. A great farce-writer may be a great man; for Molière was but a great farce-writer. In my mind, the author of Don Quixote was a great man. So have there been many others.

A great chess-player is not a great man, for he leaves the world as he found it. No act terminating in itself constitutes greatness. This will apply to all displays of power or trials of skill, which are confined to the momentary, individual effort, and construct no permanent image or trophy of themselves without them. Is not an actor then a great man, because "he dies and leaves the world no copy"? I must make an exception for Mrs. Siddons, or else give up my definition of greatness for her sake.

A man at the top of his profession is not therefore a great man. He is great in his way, but that is all, unless he shews the marks of a great moving intellect, so that we trace the master-mind, and can sympathise with the springs that urge him on. The rest is but a craft or *mystery*. John Hunter was a great man—*that* any one might see without the smallest skill in surgery. His style and manner shewed the man. He would set about cutting up the carcase of a whale with the same greatness of *gusto* that Michael Angelo would have hewn a block of marble. Lord Nelson was a great naval commander; but for myself, I have not much opinion of a sea-faring life. Sir Humphry Davy is a great chemist, but I am not sure that he is a great man. I am not a bit the wiser for any of his discoveries, nor I never met with any one that was. But it is in the nature of

greatness to propagate an idea of itself, as wave impels wave, circle without circle.

It is a contradiction in terms for a coxcomb to be a great man. A really great man has always an idea of something greater than himself. I have observed that certain sectaries and polemical writers have no higher compliment to pay their most shining lights than to say that "Such a one was a considerable man in his day." Some new elucidation of a text sets aside the authority of the old interpretation, and a "great scholar's memory outlives him half a century," at the utmost.

A rich man is not a great man, except to his dependants and his steward. A lord is a great man in the idea we have of his ancestry, and probably of himself, if we know nothing of him but his title. I have heard a story of two bishops, one of whom said (speaking of St. Peter's at Rome) that when he first entered it, he was rather awe-struck, but that as he walked up it, his mind seemed to swell and dilate with it, and at last to fill the whole building—the other said that as he saw more of it, he appeared to himself to grow less and less every step he took, and in the end to dwindle into nothing. This was in some respects a striking picture of a great and little mind—for greatness sympathises with greatness, and littleness shrinks into itself. The one might have become a Wolsey; the other was only fit to become a Mendicant Friar—or there might have been court-reasons for making him a bishop. The French have to me a character of littleness in all about them; but they have produced three great men that belong to every country, Molière, Rabelais, and Montaigne.

To return from this digression, and conclude the Essay. A singular instance of manual dexterity was shewn in the person of the late John Cavanagh, whom I have several times seen. His death was celebrated at the time in an article in the Examiner newspaper (Feb. 7, 1819), written apparently between jest and earnest: but as it is *pat* to our purpose, and falls in with my own way of considering such subjects, I shall here take leave to quote it.

"Died at his house in Burbage-street, St. Giles's, John

Cavanagh, the famous hand fives-player. When a person dies, who does any one thing better than any one else in the world, which so many others are trying to do well, it leaves a gap in society. It is not likely that any one will now see the game of fives played in its perfection for many years to come—for Cavanagh is dead, and has not left his peer behind him.

It may be said that there are things of more importance than striking a ball against a wall—there are things indeed which make more noise and do as little good, such as making war and peace, making speeches and answering them, making verses and blotting them ; making money and throwing it away. But the game of fives is what no one despises who has ever played at it. It is the finest exercise for the body, and the best relaxation for the mind.

The Roman poet said that " Care mounted behind the horseman and stuck to his skirts." But this remark would not have applied to the fives-player. He who takes to playing at fives is twice young. He feels neither the past nor future " in the instant." Debts, taxes, " domestic treason, foreign levy, nothing can touch him further." He has no other wish, no other thought, from the moment the game begins, but that of striking the ball, of placing it, of *making* it !

This Cavanagh was sure to do. Whenever he touched the ball, there was an end of the chase. His eye was certain, his hand fatal, his presence of mind complete. He could do what he pleased, and he always knew exactly what to do. He saw the whole game, and played it ; took instant advantage of his adversary's weakness, and recovered balls, as if by a miracle and from sudden thought, that every one gave for lost.

He had equal power and skill, quickness, and judgment. He could either out-wit his antagonist by finesse, or beat him by main strength. Sometimes, when he seemed preparing to send the ball with the full swing of his arm, he would by a slight turn of his wrist drop it within an inch of the line. In general, the ball came from his hand, as if from a racket, in a straight horizontal line; so that it was

in vain to attempt to overtake or stop it. As it was said of a great orator that he never was at a loss for a word, and for the properest word, so Cavanagh always could tell the degree of force necessary to be given to a ball, and the precise direction in which it should be sent. He did his work with the greatest ease; never took more pains than was necessary; and while others were fagging themselves to death, was as cool and collected as if he had just entered the court.

His style of play was as remarkable as his power of execution. He had no affectation, no trifling. He did not throw away the game to show off an attitude, or try an experiment. He was a fine, sensible, manly player, who did what he could, but that was more than any one else could even affect to do. His blows were not undecided and ineffectual—lumbering like Mr. Wordsworth's epic poetry, nor wavering like Mr. Coleridge's lyric prose, nor short of the mark like Mr. Brougham's speeches, nor wide of it like Mr. Canning's wit, nor foul like the *Quarterly*, nor *let* balls like the *Edinburgh Review*. Cobbett and Junius together would have made a Cavanagh.

He was the best *up-hill* player in the world; even when his adversary was fourteen, he would play on the same or better, and as he never flung away the game through carelessness and conceit, he never gave it up through laziness or want of heart. The only peculiarity of his play was that he never *volleyed*, but let the balls hop; but if they rose an inch from the ground, he never missed having them. There was not only nobody equal, but nobody second to him. It is supposed that he could give any other player half the game, or beat him with his left hand.

His service was tremendous. He once played Woodward and Meredith together (two of the best players in England) in the Fives-court, St. Martin's-street, and made seven and twenty aces following by services alone—a thing unheard of. He another time played Peru, who was considered a first-rate fives-player, a match of the best out of five games, and in the three first games, which of course decided the match, Peru got only one ace.

Cavanagh was an Irishman by birth, and a house-painter by profession. He had once laid aside his working dress, and walked up, in his smartest clothes, to the Rosemary Branch to have an afternoon's pleasure. A person accosted him, and asked him if he would have a game. So they agreed to play for half-a-crown a game, and a bottle of cider. The first game began—it was seven, eight, ten, thirteen, fourteen, all. Cavanagh won it. The next was the same. They played on, and each game was hardly contested. "There," said the unconscious fives-player, "there was a stroke that Cavanagh could not take: I never played better in my life, and yet I can't win a game. I don't know how it is."

However, they played on, Cavanagh winning every game, and the by-standers drinking the cider, and laughing all the time. In the twelfth game, when Cavanagh was only four, and the stranger thirteen, a person came in, and said, "What! are you here, Cavanagh?" The words were no sooner pronounced than the astonished player let the ball drop from his hand, and saying, "What! have I been breaking my heart all this time to beat Cavanagh?" refused to make another effort. "And yet, I give you my word," said Cavanagh, telling the story with some triumph, "I played all the while with my clenched fist."

He used frequently to play matches at Copenhagen-house for wagers and dinners. The wall against which they play is the same that supports the kitchen-chimney, and when the wall resounded louder than usual, the cooks exclaimed, "Those are the Irishman's balls," and the joints trembled on the spit!—Goldsmith consoled himself that there were places where he too was admired: and Cavanagh was the admiration of all the fives-courts, where he ever played.

Mr. Powell, when he played matches in the Court in St. Martin's-street, used to fill his gallery at half a crown a head, with amateurs and admirers of talent in whatever department it is shown. He could not have shown himself in any ground in England, but he would have been immediately surrounded with inquisitive gazers, trying to

find out in what part of his frame his unrivalled skill lay, as politicians wonder to see the balance of Europe suspended in Lord Castlereagh's face, and admire the trophies of the British Navy lurking under Mr. Croker's hanging brow. Now Cavanagh was as good-looking a man as the Noble Lord, and much better looking than the Right Hon. Secretary. He had a clear, open countenance, and did not look sideways or down, like Mr. Murray the bookseller.

He was a young fellow of sense, humour, and courage. He once had a quarrel with a waterman at Hungerford-stairs, and, they say, served him out in great style. In a word, there are hundreds at this day, who cannot mention his name without admiration, as the best fives-player that perhaps ever lived (the greatest excellence of which they have any notion)—and the noisy shout of the ring happily stood him in stead of the unheard voice of posterity!

The only person who seems to have excelled as much in another way as Cavanagh did in his, was the late John Davies, the racket-player. It was remarked of him that he did not seem to follow the ball, but the ball seemed to follow him. Give him a foot of wall, and he was sure to make the ball. The four best racket-players of that day were Jack Spines, Jem. Harding, Armitage, and Church. Davies could give any of these two hands a time, that is, half the game, and each of these, at their best, could give the best player now in London the same odds. Such are the gradations in all exertions of human skill and art. He once played four capital players together, and beat them. He was also a first-rate tennis-player, and an excellent fives-player. In the Fleet or King's Bench, he would have stood against Powell, who was reckoned the best open-ground player of his time.

This last-mentioned player is at present the keeper of the Fives-court, and we might recommend to him for a motto over his door—"Who enters here, forgets himself, his country, and his friends." And the best of it is, that by the calculation of the odds, none of the three are worth remembering!

Cavanagh died from the bursting of a blood-vessel,

which prevented him from playing for the last two or three years. This, he was often heard to say, he thought hard upon him. He was fast recovering, however, when he was suddenly carried off, to the regret of all who knew him. As Mr. Peel made it a qualification of the present Speaker, Mr. Manners Sutton, that he was an excellent moral character, so Jack Cavanagh was a zealous Catholic, and could not be persuaded to eat meat on a Friday, the day on which he died. We have paid this willing tribute to his memory.

"Let no rude hand deface it,
And his forlorn '*Hic Jacet.*'"

THE FIGHT.

"——The *fight*, the *fight's* the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."

Where there's a will, there's a way.—I said so to myself, as I walked down Chancery-lane, about half-past six o'clock on Monday the 10th of December, to inquire at Jack Randall's where the fight the next day was to be; I found "the proverb" nothing "musty" in the present instance. I was determined to see this fight, come what would, and see it I did, in great style. It was my *first fight*, yet it more than answered my expectations. Ladies! it is to you I dedicate this description; nor let it seem out of character for the fair to notice the exploits of the brave. Courage and modesty are the old English virtues; and may they never look cold and askance on one another! Think, ye fairest of the fair, loveliest of the lovely kind, ye practisers of soft enchantment, how many more ye kill with poisoned baits than ever fell in the ring; and listen with subdued air and without shuddering, to a tale tragic only in appearance, and sacred to the FANCY!

I was going down Chancery-lane, thinking to ask at Jack Randall's where the fight was to be, when looking through the glass-door of the *Hole in the Wall*, I heard a gentleman asking the same question *at* Mrs. Randall, as the author of Waverley would express it. Now Mrs. Randall stood answering the gentleman's question, with the authenticity of the lady of the Champion of the Light Weights. Thinks I, I'll wait till this person comes out, and learn from him how it is. For to say a truth, I was not fond of going into this house of call for heroes and philosophers, ever since the owner of it (for Jack is no gentleman) threatened once upon a time to kick me out of doors for wanting a mutton-

chop at his hospitable board, when the conqueror in thirteen battles was more full of *blue ruin* than of good manners. I was the more mortified at this repulse, inasmuch as I had heard Mr. James Simpkins, hosier in the Strand, one day when the character of the *Hole in the Wall* was brought in question, observe—" The house is a very good house, and the company quite genteel : I have been there myself ! "

Remembering this unkind treatment of mine host, to which mine hostess was also a party, and not wishing to put her in unquiet thoughts at a time jubilant like the present, I waited at the door, when, who should issue forth but my friend Jo. Toms, and turning suddenly up Chancery-lane with that quick jerk and impatient stride which distinguishes a lover of the FANCY, I said, " I'll be hanged if that fellow is not going to the fight, and is on his way to get me to go with him." So it proved in effect, and we agreed to adjourn to my lodgings to discuss measures with that cordiality which makes old friends like new, and new friends like old, on great occasions.

We are cold to others only when we are dull in ourselves, and have neither thoughts nor feelings to impart to them. Give a man a topic in his head, a throb of pleasure in his heart, and he will be glad to share it with the first person he meets. Toms and I, though we seldom meet, were an *alter idem* on this memorable occasion, and had not an idea that we did not candidly impart ; and " so carelessly did we fleet the time," that I wish no better, when there is another fight, than to have him for a companion on my journey down, and to return with my friend Jack Pigott, talking of what was to happen, or of what did happen, with a noble subject always at hand, and liberty to digress to others whenever they offered. Indeed, on my repeating the lines from Spenser in an involuntary fit of enthusiasm,

> "What more felicity can fall to creature,
> Than to enjoy delight with liberty ?"

my last-named ingenious friend stopped me by saying that this, translated into the vulgate, meant " *Going to see a fight.*"

Jo. Toms and I could not settle about the method of going down. He said there was a caravan, he understood, to start from Tom Belcher's at two, which would go there *right out* and back again the next day. Now I never travel all night, and said I should get a cast to Newbury by one of the mails. Jo. swore the thing was impossible. and I could only answer that I had made up my mind to it. In short, he seemed to me to waver, said he only came to see if I was going, had letters to write, a cause coming on the day after, and faintly said at parting (for I was bent on setting out that moment)—" Well, we meet at Philippi ! "

I made the best of my way to Piccadilly. The mail coach stand was bare. " They are all gone," said I—" this is always the way with me—in the instant I lose the future—if I had not stayed to pour out that last cup of tea, I should have been just in time "—and cursing my folly and ill-luck together, without inquiring at the coach-office whether the mails were gone or not, I walked on in despite, and to punish my own dilatoriness and want of determination. At any rate, I would not turn back : I might get to Hounslow, or perhaps farther, to be on my road the next morning.

I passed Hyde Park Corner (my Rubicon), and trusted to fortune. Suddenly I heard the clattering of a Brentford stage, and the fight rushed full upon my fancy. I argued (not unwisely) that even a Brentford coachman was better company than my own thoughts (such as they were just then), and at his invitation mounted the box with him. I immediately stated my case to him—namely, my quarrel with myself for missing the Bath or Bristol mail, and my determination to get on in consequence as well as I could, without any disparagement or insulting comparison between longer or shorter stages.

It is a maxim with me that stage-coaches, and consequently stage-coachmen, are respectable in proportion to the distance they have to travel : so I said nothing on that subject to my Brentford friend. Any incipient tendency to an abstract proposition, or (as he might have construed it) to a personal reflection of this kind, was however nipped

in the bud ; for I had no sooner declared indignantly that I had missed the mails, than he flatly denied that they were gone along, and lo ! at the instant three of them drove by in rapid, provoking, orderly succession, as if they would devour the ground before them.

Here again I seemed in the contradictory situation of the man in Dryden who exclaims,

"I follow Fate, which does too hard pursue ! "

If I had stopped to inquire at the White Horse Cellar, which would not have taken me a minute, I should now have been driving down the road in all the dignified unconcern and *ideal* perfection of mechanical conveyance. The Bath mail I had set my mind upon, and I had missed it, as I missed every thing else, by my own absurdity, in putting the will for the deed, and aiming at ends without employing means. " Sir," said he of the Brentford, " the Bath mail will be up presently, my brother-in-law drives it, and I will engage to stop him if there is a place empty."

I almost doubted my good genius ; but, sure enough, up it drove like lightning, and stopped directly at the call of the Brentford Jehu. I would not have believed this possible, but the brother-in-law of a mail coach driver is himself no mean man. I was transferred without loss of time from the top of one coach to that of the other, desired the guard to pay my fare to the Brentford coachman for me as I had no change, was accommodated with a great coat, put up my umbrella to keep off a drizzling mist, and we began to cut through the air like an arrow.

The mile-stones disappeared one after another, the rain kept off ; Tom Turtle, the trainer, sat before me on the coach box, with whom I exchanged civilities as a gentleman going to the fight ; the passion that had transported me an hour before was subdued to pensive regret and conjectural musing on the next day's battle ; I was promised a place inside at Reading, and upon the whole, I thought myself a lucky fellow. Such is the force of imagination ! On the outside of any other coach on the 10th of December, with a Scotch mist drizzling through the cloudy moonlight

air, I should have been cold, comfortless, impatient, and, no doubt, wet through; but seated on the Royal mail, I felt warm and comfortable, the air did me good, the ride did me good, I was pleased with the progress we had made, and confident that all would go well through the journey.

When I got inside at Reading, I found Turtle and a stout valetudinarian, whose costume bespoke him one of the FANCY, and who had risen from a three months' sick bed to get into the mail to see the fight. They were intimate, and we fell into a lively discourse. My friend the trainer was confined in his topics to fighting dogs and men, to bears and badgers; beyond this he was "quite chap-fallen," and had not a word to throw at a dog, or indeed very wisely fell asleep, when any other game was started. The whole art of training (I, however, learnt from him,) consists in two things, exercise and abstinence, abstinence and exercise, repeated alternately and without end. A yolk of an egg with a spoonful of rum in it is the first thing in the morning, and then a walk of six miles till breakfast. This meal consists of a plentiful supply of tea and toast and beaf-steaks. Then another six or seven miles till dinner-time, and another supply of solid beef or mutton with a pint of porter, and perhaps, at the utmost, a couple of glasses of sherry. Martin trains on water, but this increases his infirmity on another very dangerous side. The Gas-man takes now and then a chirping glass (under the rose) to console him, during a six weeks' probation, for the absence of Mrs. Hickman—an agreeable woman, with (I understand) a pretty fortune of two hundred pounds.

How matter presses on me! What stubborn things are facts! How inexhaustible is nature and art! "It is well," as I once heard Mr. Richmond observe, "to see a variety." He was speaking of cock-fighting as an edifying spectacle. I cannot deny but that one learns more of what *is* (I do not say of what *ought to be*) in this desultory mode of practical study, than from reading the same book twice over, even though it should be a moral treatise.

Where was I? I was sitting at dinner with the candidate for the honours of the ring, "where good digestion waits on

appetite, and health on both." Then follows an hour of social chat and native glee; and afterwards, to another breathing over healthy hill or dale. Back to supper, and then to bed, and up by six again—Our hero

> "Follows so the ever-running sun
> With profitable *ardour* "—

to the day that brings him victory or defeat in the green fairy circle. Is not this life more sweet than mine? I was going to say; but I will not libel any life by comparing it to mine, which is (at the date of these presents) bitter as coloquintida and the dregs of aconitum!

The invalid in the Bath mail soared a pitch above the trainer, and did not sleep so sound, because he had "more figures and more fantasies." We talked the hours away merrily. He had faith in surgery, for he had had three ribs set right, that had been broken in a *turn-up* at Belcher's, but thought physicians old women, for they had no antidote in their catalogue for brandy. An indigestion is an excellent common-place for two people that never met before. By way of ingratiating myself, I told him the story of my doctor, who, on my earnestly representing to him that I thought his regimen had done me harm, assured me that the whole pharmacopeia contained nothing comparable to the prescription he had given me; and, as a proof of its undoubted efficacy, said, that, "he had had one gentleman with my complaint under his hands for the last fifteen years."

This anecdote made my companion shake the rough sides of his three great coats with boisterous laughter; and Turtle, starting out of his sleep, swore he knew how the fight would go, for he had had a dream about it. Sure enough the rascal told us how the three first rounds went off, but "his dream," like others, "denoted a foregone conclusion." He knew his men.

The moon now rose in silver state, and I ventured, with some hesitation, to point out this object of placid beauty, with the blue serene beyond, to the man of science, to which his ear he "seriously inclined," the more as it gave promise

d'un beau jour for the morrow, and showed the ring undrenched by envious showers, arrayed in sunny smiles.

Just then, all going on well, I thought on my friend Toms, whom I had left behind, and said innocently, "There was a blockhead of a fellow I left in town, who said there was no possibility of getting down by the mail, and talked of going by a caravan from Belcher's at two in the morning, after he had written some letters. "Why," said he of the lapells, "I should not wonder if that was the very person we saw running about like mad from one coach-door to another, and asking if any one had seen a friend of his, a gentleman going to the fight, whom he had missed stupidly enough by staying to write a note." "Pray, Sir," said my fellow-traveller, "had he a plaid-cloak on?"—"Why, no," said I, "not at the time I left him, but he very well might afterwards, for he offered to lend me one." The plaid-cloak and the letter decided the thing.

Joe, sure enough, was in the Bristol mail, which preceded us by about fifty yards. This was droll enough. We had now but a few miles to our place of destination, and the first thing I did on alighting at Newbury, both coaches stopping at the same time, was to call out, "Pray, is there a gentleman in that mail of the name of Toms?" "No," said Joe, borrowing something of the vein of Gilpin, "for I have just got out." "Well!" says he, "this is lucky; but you don't know how vexed I was to miss you; for," added he, lowering his voice, "do you know when I left you I went to Belcher's to ask about the caravan, and Mrs. Belcher said very obligingly, she couldn't tell about that, but there were two gentlemen who had taken places by the mail and were gone on in a landau, and she could frank us. It's a pity I didn't meet with you; we could then have got down for nothing. But *mum's the word*." It's the devil for any one to tell me a secret, for it's sure to come out in print. I do not care so much to gratify a friend, but the public ear is too great a temptation to me.

Our present business was to get beds and a supper at an inn; but this was no easy task. The public-houses were full, and where you saw a light at a private house, and

people poking their heads out of the casement to see what was going on, they instantly put them in and shut the window, the moment you seemed advancing with a suspicious overture for accommodation. Our guard and coachman thundered away at the outer gate of the Crown for some time without effect—such was the greater noise within ;—and when the doors were unbarred, and we got admittance, we found a party assembled in the kitchen round a good hospitable fire, some sleeping, others drinking, others talking on politics and on the fight.

A tall English yeoman (something like Matthews in the face, and quite as great a wag)—

"A lusty man to ben an abbot able,"—

was making such a prodigious noise about rent and taxes, and the price of corn now and formerly, that he had prevented us from being heard at the gate. The first thing I heard him say was to a shuffling fellow who wanted to be off a bet for a shilling glass of brandy and water—" Confound it, man, don't be *insipid*!" Thinks I, that is a good phrase. It was a good omen. He kept it up so all night, nor flinched with the approach of morning. He was a fine fellow, with sense, wit, and spirit, a hearty body and a joyous mind, free-spoken, frank, convivial—one of that true English breed that went with Harry the Fifth to the siege of Harfleur—" standing like greyhounds in the slips," &c.

We ordered tea and eggs (beds were soon found to be out of the question) and this fellow's conversation was *sauce piquante*. It did one's heart good to see him brandish his oaken towel and to hear him talk. He made mince-meat of a drunken, stupid, red-faced, quarrelsome, *frowsy* farmer, whose nose " he moralized into a thousand similes," making it out a firebrand like Bardolph's. " I'll tell you what my friend," says he, " the landlady has only to keep you here to save fire and candle. If one was to touch your nose, it would go off like a piece of charcoal."

At this the other only grinned like an idiot, the sole variety in his purple face being his little peering grey eyes

and yellow teeth ; called for another glass, swore he would not stand it ; and after many attempts to provoke his humourous antagonist to single combat, which the other turned off (after working him up to a ludicrous pitch of choler) with great adroitness, he fell quietly asleep with a glass of liquor in his hand, which he could not lift to his head. His laughing persecutor made a speech over him, and turning to the opposite side of the room, where they were all sleeping in the midst of this "loud and furious fun," said, "There's a scene, by G—d, for Hogarth to paint. I think he and Shakspeare were our two best men at copying life."

This confirmed me in my good opinion of him. Hogarth, Shakspeare, and Nature, were just enough for him (indeed for any man) to know. I said, "You read Cobbett, don't you? At least," says I, "you talk just as well as he writes." He seemed to doubt this. But I said, "We have an hour to spare : if you'll get pen, ink, and paper, and keep on talking, I'll write down what you say ; and if it doesn't make a capital "Political Register," I'll forfeit my head. You have kept me alive to-night, however. I don't know what I should have done without you." He did not dislike this view of the thing, nor my asking if he was not about the size of Jem Belcher ; and he told me soon afterwards, in the confidence of friendship, that "the circumstance which had given him nearly the greatest concern in his life, was Cribb's beating Jem after he had lost his eye by racket playing."

The morning dawns, that dim but yet clear light appears, which weighs like solid bars of metal on the sleepless eyelids ; the guests drop down from their chambers one by one—but it was too late to think of going to bed now (the clock was on the stroke of seven), we had nothing for it but to find a barber's (the pole that glittered in the morning sun lighted us to his shop), and then a nine miles' march to Hungerford. The day was fine, the sky was blue, the mists were retiring from the marshy ground, the path was tolerably dry, the sitting-up all night had not done us much harm—at least the cause was good ; we talked of this and

that with amicable difference, roving and sipping of many subjects, but still invariably we returned to the fight. At length, a mile to the left of Hungerford, on a gentle eminence, we saw the ring surrounded by covered carts, gigs, and carriages, of which hundreds had passed us on the road; Toms gave a youthful shout, and we hastened down a narrow lane to the scene of action.

Reader, have you ever seen a fight? If not, you have a pleasure to come, at least if it is a fight like that between the Gas-man and Bill Neate. The crowd was very great when we arrived on the spot; open carriages were coming up, with streamers flying and music playing, and the country-people were pouring in over hedge and ditch in all directions, to see their hero beat or be beaten. The odds were still on Gas, but only about five to four. Gully had been down to try Neate, and had backed him considerably, which was a damper to the sanguine confidence of the adverse party. About two hundred thousand pounds were pending.

The Gas says, he has lost 3000*l.* which were promised him by different gentlemen if he had won. He had presumed too much on himself, which had made others presume on him. This spirited and formidable young fellow seems to have taken for his motto the old maxim, that "there are three things necessary to success in life—*Impudence*! *Impudence*! *Impudence*!" It is so in matters of opinion, but not in the *Fancy*, which is the most practical of all things, though even here confidence is half the battle, but only half. Our friend had vapoured and swaggered too much, as if he wanted to grin and bully his adversary out of the fight. "Alas! the Bristol man was not so tamed!"—"This is *the grave-digger*" (would Tom Hickman exclaim in the moments of intoxication from gin and success, shewing his tremendous right hand), "this will send many of them to their long homes; I haven't done with them yet!"

Why should he—though he had licked four of the best men within the hour, yet why should he threaten to inflict dishonourable chastisement on my old master Richmond,

a veteran going off the stage, and who has borne his sable honours meekly? Magnanimity, my dear Tom, and bravery, should be inseparable. Or why should he go up to his antagonist, the first time he ever saw him at the Fives Court, and measuring him from head to foot with a glance of contempt, as Achilles surveyed Hector, say to him, "What, are you Bill Neate? I'll knock more blood out of that great carcase of thine, this day fortnight, than you ever knock'd out of a bullock's!" It was not manly, 'twas not fighter-like. If he were sure of the victory (as he was not), the less said about it the better.

Modesty should accompany the *Fancy* as its shadow. The best men were always the best behaved. Jem Belcher, the Game Chicken (before whom the Gas-man could not have lived), were civil, silent men. So is Cribb, so is Tom Belcher, the most elegant of sparrers, and not a man for every one to take by the nose. I enlarged on this topic in the mail (while Turtle was asleep), and said very wisely (as I thought) that impertinence was a part of no profession. A boxer was bound to beat his man, but not to thrust his fist, either actually or by implication, in every one's face. Even a highwayman, in the way of trade, may blow out your brains, but if he uses foul language at the same time, I should say he was no gentleman. A boxer, I would infer, need not be a blackguard or a coxcomb, more than another.

Perhaps I press this point too much on a fallen man—Mr. Thomas Hickman has by this time learnt that first of all lessons, "That man was made to mourn." He has lost nothing by the late fight but his presumption; and that every man may do as well without! By an over-display of this quality, however, the public had been prejudiced against him, and the *knowing-ones* were taken in. Few but those who had bet on him wished Gas to win.

With my own prepossessions on the subject, the result of the 11th of December appeared to me as a fine piece of poetical justice as I had ever witnessed. The difference of weight between the two combatants (14 stone to 12) was nothing to the sporting men. Great, heavy, clumsy, long-armed Bill Neate kicked the beam in the scale of the Gas-

man's vanity. The amateurs were frightened at his big words, and thought that they would make up for the difference of six feet and five feet nine. Truly, the FANCY are not men of imagination. They judge of what has been, and cannot conceive of any thing that is to be. The Gas-man had won hitherto ; therefore he must beat a man half as big again as himself—and that to a certainty. Besides, there are as many feuds, factions, prejudices, pedantic notions in the FANCY as in the state or in the schools. Mr. Gully is almost the only cool, sensible man among them, who exercises an unbiassed discretion, and is not a slave to his passions in these matters.

But enough of reflections, and to our tale. The day, as I have said, was fine for a December morning. The grass was wet, and the groud miry, and ploughed up with multitudinous feet, except that, within the ring itself, there was a spot of virgin-green closed in and unprofaned by vulgar tread, that shone with dazzling brightness in the mid-day sun. For it was now noon, and we had an hour to wait. This is the trying time. It is then the heart sickens, as you think what the two champions are about, and how short a time will determine their fate. After the first blow is struck, there is no opportunity for nervous apprehensions ; you are swallowed up in the immediate interest of the scene—but

> "Between the acting of a dreadful thing
> And the first motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream."

I found it so as I felt the sun's rays clinging to my back, and saw the white wintry clouds sink below the verge of the horizon. "So, I thought, my fairest hopes have faded from my sight !—so will the Gas-man's glory, or that of his adversary, vanish in an hour."

The *swells* were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the *cockneys* had been distanced by the sixty-six miles) ; the time drew near, I had got a good stand ; a bustle, a buzz, ran through the

crowd, and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose great coat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk; and, with a modest cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring.

He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress; when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the walk. He strutted about more than became a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of supererogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax, to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day.

By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, "with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear" the pugilistic reputation of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed, light, vigorous, elastic, and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther's hide. There was now a dead pause—attention was awe-struck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short—did not feel his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the *scratch*—shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds, three first, and then following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout, and I said, "There is no standing this." Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man's blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body.

They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledge-hammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard—they struck mutually and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored—the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how it would end.

This was the only moment in which opinion was divided; for, in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck, with his right hand, and failing from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted a tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow, and made a red ruin of that side of his face. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout—a roar of triumph as the waves of fortune rolled tumultuously from side to side. This was a settler. Hickman got up, and "grinned horrible a ghastly smile," yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself; it was the first time he had ever been so punished; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened,—his blows could not tell at such a distance,—he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his feet; and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring—no half-hits—no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-maitreship* of the art—they were almost all knock-down blows:—the fight was a good stand-up fight.

The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover

strength and resolution; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their bodies; and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand steady to inflict or receive mortal offence, and rush upon each other "like two clouds over the Caspian"—this is the most astonishing thing of all:—this is the high and heroic state of man!

From this time forward the event became more certain every round; and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me; but in the scuffle, he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky.

I never saw any thing more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from him. His face was like a human skull, a death's head, spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was not like an actual man, but like a preternatural, spectral appearance, or like one of the figures in Dante's *Inferno*. Yet he fought on after this for several rounds, still striking the first desperate blow, and Neate standing on the defensive, and using the same cautious guard to the last, as if he had still all his work to do; and it was not till the Gas-man was so stunned in the seventeenth or eighteenth round, that his senses forsook him, and he could not come to time, that the battle was declared over*.

Ye who despise the Fancy, do something to show as much *pluck*, or as much self-possession as this, before you

* Scroggins said of the Gas-man, that he thought he was a man of that courage, that if his hands were cut off, he would still fight on with the stumps—like that of Widrington,—

——"In doleful dumps,
Who, when his legs were smitten off,
Still fought upon his stumps."

assume a superiority which you have never given a single proof of by any one action in the whole course of your lives!

When the Gas-man came to himself, the first words he uttered were, "Where am I? What is the matter?" "Nothing is the matter, Tom,—you have lost the battle, but you are the bravest man alive." And Jackson whispered to him, "I am collecting a purse for you, Tom."—Vain sounds, and unheard at that moment! Neate instantly went up and shook him cordially by the hand, and seeing some old acquaintance began to flourish with his fists, calling out, "Ah you always said I couldn't fight —What do you think now?" But all in good humour, and without any appearance of arrogance; only it was evident Bill Neate was pleased that he had won the fight. When it was over, I asked Cribb if he did not think it was a good one? He said, "*Pretty well!*" The carrier-pigeons now mounted into the air, and one of them flew with the news of her husband's victory to the bosom of Mrs. Neate. Alas, for Mrs. Hickman!

Mais au revoir, as Sir Fopling Flutter says. I went down with Toms; I returned with Jack Pigott, whom I met on the ground. Toms is a rattle brain; Pigott is a sentimentalist. Now, under favour, I am a sentimentalist too—therefore I say nothing, but that the interest of the excursion did not flag as I came back. Pigott and I marched along the causeway leading from Hungerford to Newbury, now observing the effect of a brilliant sun on the tawny meads or moss-coloured cottages, now exulting in the fight, now digressing to some topic of general and elegant literature. My friend was dressed in character for the occasion, or like one of the FANCY; that is, with a double portion of great coats, clogs, and overhauls: and just as we had agreed with a couple of country-lads to carry his superfluous wearing-apparel to the next town, we were overtaken by a return post-chaise, into which I got, Pigott preferring a seat on the bar.

There were two strangers already in the chaise, and on their observing they supposed I had been to the fight, I

said I had, and concluded they had done the same. They appeared, however, a little shy and sore on the subject; and it was not till after several hints dropped, and questions put, that it turned out that they had missed it. One of these friends had undertaken to drive the other there in his gig: they had set out, to make sure work, the day before at three in the afternoon. The owner of the one-horse vehicle scorned to ask his way, and drove right on to Bagshot, instead of turning off at Hounslow: there they stopped all night, and set off the next day across the country to Reading, from whence they took coach, and got down within a mile or two of Hungerford, just half an hour after the fight was over. This might be safely set down as one of the miseries of human life.

We parted with these two gentlemen who had been to see the fight, but had returned as they went, at Wolhampton, where we were promised beds (an irresistible temptation, for Pigott had passed the preceding night at Hungerford as we had done at Newbury), and we turned into an old bow-windowed parlour with a carpet and a snug fire; and after devouring a quantity of tea, toast, and eggs, sat down to consider, during an hour of philosophic leisure, what we should have for supper. In the midst of an Epicurean deliberation between a roasted fowl and mutton chops with mashed potatoes, we were interrupted by an inroad of Goths and Vandals—*O procul este profani*—not real flash-men, but interlopers, noisy pretenders, butchers from Tothill-fields, brokers from Whitechapel, who called immediately for pipes and tobacco, hoping it would not be disagreeable to the gentlemen, and began to insist that it was a *cross*. Pigott withdrew from the smoke and noise into another room, and left me to dispute the point with them for a couple of hours *sans intermission* by the dial.

The next morning we rose refreshed; and on observing that Jack had a pocket volume in his hand, in which he read in the intervals of our discourse, I inquired what it was, and learned to my particular satisfaction that it was a volume of the New Eloise. Ladies, after this, will you

contend that a love for the FANCY is incompatible with the cultivation of sentiment?

We jogged on as before, my friend setting me up in a genteel drab great coat and green silk handkerchief (which I must say became me exceedingly), and after stretching our legs for a few miles, and seeing Jack Randall, Ned Turner, and Scroggins, pass on the top of one of the Bath coaches, we engaged with the driver of the second to take us to London for the usual fee.

I got inside, and found three other passengers. One of them was an old gentleman with an aquiline nose, powdered hair, and a pigtail, and who looked as if he had played many a rubber at the Bath rooms. I said to myself, he is very like Mr. Windham; I wish he would enter into conversation, that I might hear what fine observations would come from those finely-turned features. However, nothing passed, till, stopping to dine at Reading, some inquiry was made by the company about the fight, and I gave (as the reader may believe) an eloquent and animated description of it.

When we got into the coach again, the old gentleman, after a graceful exordium, said, he had, when a boy, been to a fight between the famous Broughton and George Stevenson, who was called the *Fighting Coachman*, in the year 1770, with the late Mr. Windham. This beginning flattered the spirit of prophecy within me and rivetted my attention.

He went on—"George Stevenson was coachman to a friend of my father's. He was an old man when I saw him some years afterwards. He took hold of his own arm and said, 'there was muscle here once, but now it is no more than this young gentleman's.' He added, 'well, no matter; I have been here long, I am willing to go hence, and I hope I have done no more harm than another man.' Once," said my unknown companion, "I asked him if he had ever beat Broughton? He said Yes; that he had fought with him three times, and the last time he fairly beat him, though the world did not allow it.

"'I'll tell you how it was, master. When the seconds lifted us up in the last round, we were so exhausted that

neither of us could stand, and we fell upon one another, and as Master Broughton fell uppermost, the mob gave it in his favour, and he was said to have won the battle. But,' says he, 'the fact was, that as his second (John Cuthbert) lifted him up, he said to him, "I'll fight no more, I've had enough"; 'which,' says Stevenson, 'you know gave me the victory. And to prove to you that this was the case, when John Cuthbert was on his death-bed, and they asked him if there was any thing on his mind which he wished to confess, he answered, "Yes, that there was one thing he wished to set right, for that certainly Master Stevenson won that last fight with Master Broughton; for he whispered him as he lifted him up in the last round of all, that he had had enough."'"

"This," said the Bath gentleman, "was a bit of human nature"; and I have written this account of the fight on purpose that it might not be lost to the world. He also stated as a proof of the candour of mind in this class of men, that Stevenson acknowledged that Broughton could have beat him in his best day; but that he (Broughton) was getting old in their last rencounter. When we stopped in Piccadilly, I wanted to ask the gentleman some questions about the late Mr. Windham, but had not courage. I got out, resigned my coat and green silk handkerchief to Pigott (loth to part with these ornaments of life), and walked home in high spirits.

P.S. Toms called upon me the next day, to ask me if I did not think the fight was a complete thing? I said I thought it was. I hope he will relish my account of it.

ON RESPECTABLE PEOPLE.

There is not any term that is oftener misapplied, or that is a stronger instance of the abuse of language, than this same word, *respectable*. By a *respectable man* is generally meant a person whom there is no reason for respecting, or none that we choose to name: for if there is any good reason for the opinion we wish to express, we naturally assign it as the ground of his respectability. If the person whom you are desirous to characterize favourably, is distinguished for his good nature, you say that he is a good-natured man; if by his zeal to serve his friends, you call him a friendly man; if by his wit or sense, you say that he is witty or sensible; if by his honesty or learning, you say so at once; but if he is none of these, and there is no one quality which you can bring forward to justify the high opinion you would be thought to entertain of him, you then take the question for granted, and jump at a conclusion, by observing gravely, that "he is a very respectable man."

It is clear, indeed, that where we have any striking and generally admitted reasons for respecting a man, the most obvious way to ensure the respect of others, will be to mention his estimable qualities; where these are wanting, the wisest course must be to say nothing about them, but to insist on the general inference which we have our particular reasons for drawing, only vouching for its authenticity. If, for instance, the only motive we have for thinking or speaking well of another is, that he gives us good dinners, as this is not a valid reason to those who do not, like us, partake of his hospitality, we may (without going into particulars) content ourselves with assuring them that he is a most respectable man: if he is a slave to

those above him, and an oppressor of those below him, but sometimes makes us the channels of his bounty or the tools of his caprice, it may be as well to say nothing of the matter, but to confine ourselves to the safer generality, that he is a person of the highest respectability: if he is a low dirty fellow, who has amassed an immense fortune, which he does not know what to do with, the possession of it alone will guarantee his respectability, if we say nothing of the manner in which he has come by it, or in which he spends it.

A man may be a knave or a fool, or both (as it may happen), and yet be a most respectable man, in the common and authorized sense of the term, provided he keeps up appearances, and does not give common fame a handle for no longer keeping up the imposture. The best title to the character of respectability lies in the convenience of those who echo the cheat, and in the conventional hypocrisy of the world. Any one may lay claim to it who is willing to give himself airs of importance, and can find means to divert others from inquiring too strictly into his pretensions. It is a disposable commodity,—not a part of the man, that sticks to him like his skin, but an appurtenance, like his goods and chattels. It is meat, drink, and clothing to those who take the benefit of it by allowing others the credit. It is the current coin, the circulating medium, in which the fictitious intercourse of the world is carried on, the bribe which interest pays to vanity.

Respectability includes all that vague and indefinable mass of respect floating in the world, which arises from sinister motives in the person who pays it, and is offered to adventitious and doubtful qualities in the person who receives it. It is spurious and nominal; hollow and venal. To suppose that it is to be taken literally or applied to sterling merit, would betray the greatest ignorance of the customary use of speech. When we hear the word coupled with the name of any individual, it would argue a degree of romantic simplicity to imagine that it implies any one quality of head or heart, any one excellence of body or mind, any one good action or praiseworthy sentiment; but as soon as it is mentioned, it conjures up the ideas of a

handsome house with large acres round it, a sumptuous table, a cellar well stocked with excellent wines, splendid furniture, a fashionable equipage, with a long list of elegant contingencies.

It is not what a man *is*, but what he *has*, that we speak of in the significant use of this term. He may be the poorest creature in the world in himself, but if he is well to do, and can spare some of his superfluities, if he can lend us his purse or his countenance upon occasion, he then "buys golden opinions" of us;—it is but fit that we should speak well of the bridge that carries us over, and in return for what we can get from him, we embody our servile gratitude, hopes, and fears, in this word respectability. By it we pamper his pride, and feed our own necessities. It must needs be a very honest uncorrupted word that is the go-between in this disinterested kind of traffic.

We do not think of applying this word to a great poet or a great painter, to the man of genius or the man of virtue, for it is seldom we can *spunge* upon them. It would be a solecism for any one to pretend to the character who has a shabby coat to his back, who goes without a dinner, or has not a good house over his head. He who has reduced himself in the world by devoting himself to a particular study, or adhering to a particular cause, excites only a smile of pity, or a shrug of the shoulders at the mention of his name; while he who has raised himself in it by a different course, who has become rich for want of ideas, and powerful from want of principle, is looked up to with silent homage, and passes for a respectable man. "The learned pate ducks to the golden fool." We spurn at virtue and genius in rags; and lick the dust in the presence of vice and folly in purple.

When Otway was left to starve after having produced *Venice Preserv'd*, there was nothing in the phrenzied action with which he devoured the food that choked him, to provoke the respect of the mob, who would have hooted at him the more for knowing that he was a poet. Spenser, kept waiting for the hundred pounds which Burleigh grudged him "for a song," might feel the mortification

of his situation; but the statesman never felt any diminution of his sovereign's favour in consequence of it. Charles II.'s neglect of his favourite poet Butler did not make him look less gracious in the eyes of his courtiers, or of the wits and critics of the time. Burns's embarrassments, and the temptations to which he was exposed by his situation, degraded him but left no stigma on his patrons, who still meet to celebrate his memory, and consult about his monument, in the face of day. To enrich the mind of a country by works of art or science, and leave yourself poor, is not the way for any one to rank as respectable, at least in his lifetime:—to oppress, to enslave, to cheat, and plunder it, is a much better way. "The time gives evidence of it." But the instances are common.

Respectability means a man's situation and success in life, not his character or conduct. The city merchant never loses his respectability till he becomes bankrupt. After that, we hear no more of it or him. The justice of the peace, and the parson of the parish, the lord and the squire, are allowed, by immemorial usage, to be very respectable people, though no one ever thinks of asking why. They are a sort of fixtures in this way.

To take an example from one of them. The country parson may pass his whole time, when he is not employed in the cure of souls, in flattering his rich neighbours, and leaguing with them to *snub* his poor ones, in seizing poachers, and encouraging informers; he may be exorbitant in exacting his tithes, harsh to his servants, the dread and bye-word of the village where he resides, and yet all this, though it may be notorious, shall abate nothing of his respectability. It will not hinder his patron from giving him another living to play the petty tyrant in, or prevent him from riding over to the squire's in his carriage and being well received, or from sitting on the bench of justices with due decorum and with clerical dignity.

The poor curate, in the mean time, who may be a real comfort to the bodies and minds of his parishioners, will be passed by without notice. Parson Adams, drinking his ale in Sir Thomas Booby's kitchen, makes no very respec-

table figure ; but Sir Thomas himself was right worshipful, and his widow a person of honour ! A few such historiographers as Fielding would put an end to the farce of respectability, with others like it. Peter Pounce, in the same author, was a consummation of this character, translated into the most vulgar English. The character of Captain Blifil, his epitaph, and funeral sermon, are worth tomes of casuistry, and patched up theories of moral sentiments.

Pope somewhere exclaims, in his fine indignant way,

> " What can ennoble sots, or knaves, or cowards ?
> Alas ! not all the blood of all the Howards."

But this is the heraldry of poets, not of the world. In fact, the only way for a poet now-a-days to emerge from the obscurity of poverty and genius, is to prostitute his pen, turn literary pimp to some borough-mongering lord, canvass for him at elections, and by this means aspire to the same importance, and be admitted on the same respectable footing with him as his valet, his steward, or his practising attorney. A Jew, a stock-jobber, a war contractor, a successful monopolist, a nabob, an Indian director, or an African slave-dealer, are all very respectable people in their turn.

A member of parliament is not only respectable, but *honourable* ;—" all honourable men ! " Yet this circumstance, which implies such a world of respect, really means nothing. To say of any one that he is a member of parliament, is to say, at the same time, that he is not at all distinguished as such. No body ever thought of telling you, that Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt were members of parliament. Such is the constant difference between names and things !

The most mischievous and offensive use of this word has been in politics. By respectable people (in the fashionable cant of the day) are meant those who have not a particle of regard for any one but themselves, who have feathered their own nests, and only want to lie snug and warm in them. They have been set up and appealed to as the only friends of their country and the constitution, while in truth

they were friends to nothing but their own interest. With them all is well, if they are well off. They are raised by their lucky stars above the reach of the distresses of the community, and are cut off by their situation and sentiments, from any sympathy with their kind. They would see their country ruined before they would part with the least of their superfluities. Pampered in luxury and their own selfish comforts, they are proof against the calls of patriotism, and the cries of humanity. They would not get a scratch with a pin to save the universe. They are more affected by the overturning of a plate of turtle soup than by the starving of a whole county.

The most desperate characters, picked up from the most necessitous and depraved classes, are not worse judges of politics than your true, staunch, thorough-paced "lives and fortunes men," who have what is called a stake in the country, and see every thing through the medium of their cowardly and unprincipled hopes and fears.

London is, perhaps, the only place in which the standard of respectability at all varies from the standard of money. There things go as much by appearance as by weight; and he may be said to be a respectable man who cuts a certain figure in company by being dressed in the fashion, and venting a number of common-place things with tolerable grace and fluency. If a person there brings a certain share of information and good manners into mixed society, it is not asked, when he leaves it, whether he is rich or not. Lords and fiddlers, authors and common council men, editors of newspapers and parliamentary speakers, meet together, and the difference is not so much marked as one would suppose. To be an Edinburgh Reviewer is, I suspect, the highest rank in modern literary society.

ON FASHION.

" Born of nothing, begot of nothing."

" His garment neither was of silk nor say,
But painted plumes in goodly order dight,
Like as the sun-burnt Indians do array
Their tawny bodies in their proudest plight :
As those same plumes, so seem'd he vain and light,
That of his gait might easily appear ;
For still he far'd as dancing in delight,
And in his hands a windy fan did bear,
That in the idle air he mov'd still here and there."

Fashion is an odd jumble of contradictions, of sympathies and antipathies. It exists only by its being participated among a certain number of persons, and its essence is destroyed by being communicated to a greater number. It is a continual struggle between " the great vulgar and the small " to get the start of or keep up with each other in the race of appearances, by an adoption on the part of the one of such external and fantastic symbols as strike the attention and excite the envy or admiration of the beholder, and which are no sooner made known and exposed to public view for this purpose, than they are successfully copied by the multitude, the slavish herd of imitators, who do not wish to be behind-hand with their betters in outward show and pretensions, and which then sink, without any farther notice, into disrepute and contempt. Thus fashion lives only in a perpetual round of giddy innovation and restless vanity. To be old-fashioned is the greatest crime a coat or a hat can be guilty of. To look like nobody else is a sufficiently mortifying reflection ; to be in danger of being mistaken for one of the rabble is worse.

Fashion constantly begins and ends in the two things it abhors most, singularity and vulgarity. It is the perpetual

setting up and disowning a certain standard of taste, elegance, and refinement, which has no other foundation or authority than that it is the prevailing distinction of the moment, which was yesterday ridiculous from its being new, and to-morrow will be odious from its being common. It is one of the most slight and insignificant of all things. It cannot be lasting, for it depends on the constant change and shifting of its own harlequin disguises; it cannot be sterling, for, if it were, it could not depend on the breath of caprice; it must be superficial, to produce its immediate effect on the gaping crowd; and frivolous, to admit of its being assumed at pleasure by the numbers of those who affect, by being in the fashion, to be distinguished from the rest of the world. It is not any thing in itself, nor the sign of any thing but the folly and vanity of those who rely upon it as their greatest pride and ornament. It takes the firmest hold of the most flimsy and narrow minds, of those whose emptiness conceives of nothing excellent but what is thought so by others, and whose self-conceit makes them willing to confine the opinion of all excellence to themselves and those like them.

That which is true or beautiful in itself, is not the less so for standing alone. That which is good for anything, is the better for being more widely diffused. But fashion is the abortive issue of vain ostentation and exclusive egotism: it is haughty, trifling, affected, servile, despotic, mean and ambitious, precise and fantastical, all in a breath —tied to no rule, and bound to conform to every whim of the minute.

"The fashion of an hour old mocks the wearer." It is a sublimated essence of levity, caprice, vanity, extravagance, idleness, and selfishness. It thinks of nothing but not being contaminated by vulgar use, and winds and doubles like a hare, and betakes itself to the most paltry shifts to avoid being overtaken by the common hunt that are always in full chase after it. It contrives to keep up its fastidious pretensions, not by the difficulty of the attainment, but by the rapidity and evanescent nature of the changes. It is a sort of conventional badge, or under-

stood passport into select circles, which must still be varying (like the water-mark in bank-notes) not to be counterfeited by those without the pale of fashionable society; for to make the test of admission to all the privileges of that refined and volatile atmosphere depend on any real merit or extraordinary accomplishment, would exclude too many of the pert, the dull, the ignorant, too many shallow, upstart, and self-admiring pretenders, to enable the few that passed muster to keep one another in any tolerable countenance.

If it were the fashion, for instance, to be distinguished for virtue, it would be difficult to set or follow the example; but then this would confine the pretension to a small number (not the most fashionable part of the community), and would carry a very singular air with it. Or if excellence in any art or science were made the standard of fashion, this would also effectually prevent vulgar imitation, but then it would equally prevent fashionable impertinence. There would be an obscure circle of *virtù* as well as virtue, drawn within the established circle of fashion, a little province of a mighty empire;—the example of honesty would spread slowly, and learning would still have to boast of a respectable minority.

But of what use would such uncourtly and out-of-the-way accomplishments be to the great and noble, the rich and the fair, without any of the *éclat*, the noise and nonsense which belong to that which is followed and admired by all the world alike? The real and solid will never do for the current coin, the common wear and tear of foppery, and fashion. It must be the meretricious, the showy, the outwardly fine, and intrinsically worthless—that which lies within the reach of the most indolent affectation, that which can be put on or off at the suggestion of the most wilful caprice, and for which, through all its fluctuations, no mortal reason can be given, but that it is the newest absurdity in vogue!

The shape of a head-dress, whether flat or piled (curl on curl) several stories high by the help of pins and pomatum, the size of a pair of paste buckles, the quantity of gold-lace

on an embroidered waistcoat, the mode of taking a pinch of snuff, or of pulling out a pocket handkerchief, the lisping and affected pronunciation of certain words, the saying *Me'm* for *Madam*, Lord Foppington's *Tam and 'Paun hanour*, with a regular set of visiting phrases and insipid sentiments ready sorted for the day, were what formerly distinguished the mob of fine gentlemen and ladies from the mob of their inferiors.

These marks and appendages of gentility had their day, and were then discarded for others equally peremptory and unequivocal. But in all this chopping and changing, it is generally one folly that drives out another; one trifle that by its specific levity acquires a momentary and surprising ascendancy over the last. There is no striking deformity of appearance or behaviour that has not been made "the sign of an inward and invisible grace." Accidental imperfections are laid hold of to hide real defects. Paint, patches, and powder, were at one time synonymous with health, cleanliness, and beauty. Obscenity, irreligion, small oaths, tippling, gaming, effeminacy in the one sex and Amazon airs in the other, any thing is the fashion while it lasts.

In the reign of Charles II., the profession and practice of every species of extravagance and debauchery were looked upon as the indispensable marks of an accomplished cavalier. Since that period the court has reformed, and has had rather a rustic air. Our belles formerly overloaded themselves with dress: of late years, they have affected to go almost naked,—"and are, when unadorned, adorned the most." The women having left off stays, the men have taken to wear them, if we are to believe the authentic Memoirs of the Fudge Family. The Niobe head is at present buried in the *poke* bonnet, and the French milliners and *marchands des modes* have proved themselves an overmatch for the Greek sculptors, in matters of taste and costume.

A very striking change has, however, taken place in dress of late years, and some progress has been made in taste and elegance, from the very circumstance, that, as

fashion has extended its empire in that direction, it has lost its power. While fashion in dress included what was costly, it was confined to the wealthier classes ; even this was an encroachment on the privileges of rank and birth, which for a long time were the only things that commanded or pretended to command respect, and we find Shakespear complaining that " the city madam bears the cost of princes on unworthy shoulders ; " but, when the appearing in the top of the mode no longer depended on the power of purchasing certain expensive articles of dress, or the right of wearing them, the rest was so obvious and easy, that any one who chose might cut as coxcombical a figure as the best. It became a matter of mere affectation on the one side, and gradually ceased to be made a matter of aristocratic assumption on the other.

" In the grand carnival of this our age," among other changes this is not the least remarkable, that the monstrous pretensions to distinctions in dress have dwindled away by tacit consent, and the simplest and most graceful have been in the same request with all classes. In this respect, as well as some others, " the age is grown so picked, the peasant's toe comes so near the courtier's heel, it galls his kibe ; " a lord is hardly to be distinguished in the street from an attorney's clerk ; and a plume of feathers is no longer mistaken for the highest distinction in the land !

The ideas of natural equality and the Manchester steam-engines together have, like a double battery, levelled the high towers and artificial structures of fashion in dress, and a white muslin gown is now the common costume of the mistress and the maid, instead of their wearing, as heretofore, rich silks and satins or coarse linsey-wolsey. It would be ridiculous (on a similar principle) for the courtier to take the wall of the citizen, without having a sword by his side to maintain his right of precedence ; and, from the stricter notions that have prevailed of a man's personal merit and identity, a cane dangling from his arm is the greatest extension of his figure that can be allowed to the modern *petit-maitre.*

What shews the worthlessness of mere fashion is, to see

how easily this vain and boasted distinction is assumed, when the restraints of decency or circumstances are once removed, by the most uninformed and commonest of the people. I know an undertaker that is the greatest prig in the streets of London, and an Aldermanbury haberdasher, that has the most military strut of any lounger in Bond-street or St. James's. We may, at any time, raise a regiment of fops from the same number of fools, who have vanity enough to be intoxicated with the smartness of their appearance, and not sense enough to be ashamed of themselves. Every one remembers the story in Peregrine Pickle, of the strolling gipsy that he picked up in spite, had well scoured, and introduced her into genteel company, where she met with great applause, till she got into a passion by seeing a fine lady cheat at cards, rapped out a volley of oaths, and let nature get the better of art.

Dress is the great secret of address. Clothes and confidence will set any body up in the trade of modish accomplishment. Look at the two classes of well-dressed females whom we see at the play-house, in the boxes. Both are equally dressed in the height of the fashion, both are *rouged*, and wear their neck and arms bare,—both have the same conscious, haughty, theatrical air;—the same toss of the head, the same stoop in the shoulders, with all the grace that arises from a perfect freedom from embarrassment, and all the fascination that arises from a systematic disdain of formal prudery,—the same pretence and jargon of fashionable conversation,—the same mimicry of tones and phrases,—the same "lisping, and ambling, and painting, and nicknaming of Heaven's creatures;" the same every thing but real propriety of behaviour, and real refinement of sentiment. In all the externals, they are as like as the reflection in the looking-glass.

The only difference between the woman of fashion and the woman of pleasure is, that the one *is* what the other only *seems to be*; and yet, the victims of dissipation who thus rival and almost outshine women of the first quality in all the blaze, and pride, and glitter of shew and fashion, are, in general, no better than a set of raw, uneducated, inex-

perienced country girls, or awkward, coarse-fisted servant maids, who require no other apprenticeship or qualification to be on a level with persons of the highest distinction in society, in all the brilliancy and elegance of outward appearance, than that they have forfeited its common privileges, and every title to respect in reality.

The truth is, that real virtue, beauty, or understanding, are the same, whether " in a high or low degree " ; and the airs and graces of pretended superiority over these which the highest classes give themselves, from mere frivolous and external accomplishments, are easily imitated, with provoking success, by the lowest, whenever they *dare*.

The two nearest things in the world are gentility and vulgarity—

" And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

Where there is much affectation of the one, we may be always sure of meeting with a double share of the other. Those who are conscious to themselves of any real superiority or refinement, are not particularly jealous of the adventitious marks of it. Miss Burney's novels all turn upon this slender distinction. It is the only thing that can be said against them. It is hard to say which she has made out to be the worst ; low people always aping gentility, or people in high life always avoiding vulgarity. Mr. Smith and the Brangtons were everlastingly trying to do as their fashionable acquaintances did, and these again were always endeavouring *not* to do and say what Mr. Smith and the Brangtons did or said. What an instructive game at cross-purposes !

" Kings are naturally lovers of low company," according to the observation of Mr. Burke ; because their rank cannot be called into question by it, and they can only hope to find, in the opposite extreme of natural and artificial inequality, any thing to confirm them in the belief, that their personal pretensions at all answer to the ostensible superiority to which they are raised. By associating only with the worst and weakest, they persuade themselves that they are the best and wisest of mankind.

ON PREJUDICE.

Prejudice, in its ordinary and literal sense, is *prejudging* any question without having sufficiently examined it, and adhering to our opinion upon it through ignorance, malice, or perversity, in spite of every evidence to the contrary. The little that we know has a strong alloy of misgiving and uncertainty in it; the mass of things of which we have no means of judging, but of which we form a blind and confident opinion as if we were thoroughly acquainted with them, is monstrous.

Prejudice is the child of ignorance; for as our actual knowledge falls short of our desire to know, or curiosity and interest in the world about us, so must we be tempted to decide upon a greater number of things at a venture; and having no check from reason or inquiry, we shall grow more obstinate and bigoted in our conclusions, according as they have been rash and presumptuous. The absence of proof, instead of suspending our judgments, only gives us an opportunity to make things out according to our wishes and fancies; mere ignorance is a blank canvas on which we lay what colours we please, and paint objects black or white, as angels or devils, magnify or diminish them at our option; and in the vacuum either of facts or arguments, the weight of prejudice and passion falls with double force, and bears down everything before it.

If we enlarge the circle of our previous knowledge ever so little, we may meet with something to create doubt and difficulty; but as long as we remain confined to the cell of our native ignorance, while we know nothing beyond the routine of sense and custom, we shall refer everything to that standard, or make it out as we would have it to be, like spoiled children who have never been from home, and expect to find nothing in the world that does not accord with their wishes and notions. It is evident, that the

fewer things we know, the more ready we shall be to pronounce upon and condemn what is new and strange to us; that is, the less capable we shall be of varying our conceptions, and the more prone to mistake a part for the whole. What we do not understand the meaning of must necessarily appear to us ridiculous and contemptible; and we do not stop to enquire, till we have been taught by repeated experiments and warnings of our own fallibility, whether the absurdity is in ourselves or in the object of our dislike and scorn.

The most ignorant people are rude and insolent, as the most barbarous are cruel and ferocious. All our knowledge at first lying in a narrow compass (bounded by local and physical causes) whatever does not conform to this shocks us as out of reason and nature.

The less we look abroad, the more our ideas are introverted; and our habitual impressions, from being made up of a few particulars always repeated, grow together into a kind of concrete substance, which will not bear taking to pieces, and where the smallest deviation destroys the whole feeling. Thus the difference of colour in a black man was thought to forfeit his title to belong to the species, till books of voyages and travels, and old Fuller's quaint expression of "God's image carved in ebony," have brought the two ideas into a forced union, and Mr. Murray no longer libels men of colour with impunity.

The word *republic* has a harsh and incongruous sound to ears bred under a constitutional monarchy; and we strove hard for many years to overturn the French republic, merely because we could not reconcile it to ourselves that such a thing should exist at all, notwithstanding the examples of Holland, Switzerland, and many others. This term has hardly yet performed quarantine: to the loyal and patriotic it has an ugly taint in it, and is scarcely fit to be mentioned in good company. If, however, we are weaned by degrees from our prejudices against certain words that shock opinion, this is not the case with all; for those that offend good manners grow more offensive with the progress of refinement and civilization, so that

no writer now dare venture upon expressions that unwittingly disfigure the pages of our elder writers, and in this respect, instead of becoming callous or indifferent, we appear to become more fastidious every day. There is then a real grossness which does not depend on familiarity or custom.

This account of the concrete nature of prejudice, or of the manner in which our ideas by habit and the dearth of general information coalesce together into one indissoluble form, will show (what otherwise seems unaccountable) how such violent antipathies and animosities have been occasioned by the most ridiculous or trifling differences of opinion, or outward symbols of it; for, by constant custom, and the want of reflection, the most insignificant of these was as inseparably bound up with the main principle as the most important, and to give up any part was to give up the whole essence and vital interests of religion, morals, and government. Hence we see all sects and parties mutually insist on their own technical distinctions as the essentials and fundamentals of religion, and politics, and, for the slightest variation in any of these, unceremoniously attack their opponents as atheists and blasphemers, traitors and incendiaries. In fact, these minor points are laid hold of in preference, as being more obvious and tangible, and as leaving more room for the exercise of prejudice and passion.

Another thing that makes our prejudices rancorous and inveterate, is, that as they are taken up without reason, they seem to be *self-evident*; and we thence conclude, that they not only are so to ourselves, but must be so to others, so that their differing from us is wilful, hypocritical, and malicious.

The Inquisition never pretended to punish its victims for being heretics or infidels, but for avowing opinions which with their eyes open they knew to be false. That is, the whole of the Catholic faith, "that one entire and perfect chrysolite," appeared to them so completely without flaw and blameless, that they could not conceive how anyone else could imagine it to be otherwise, except from stubborn-

ness and contumacy, and would rather admit (to avoid so improbable a suggestion) that men went to a stake for an opinion, not which they held, but counterfeited, and were content to be burnt for the pleasure of playing the hypocrite. Nor is it wonderful that there should be so much repugnance to admit the existence of a serious doubt in matters of such vital and eternal interest, and on which the whole fabric of the church hinged, since the first doubt that was expressed on any single point drew all the rest after it ; and the first person who started a conscientious scruple, and claimed the *trial by reason*, threw down, as if by a magic spell, the strongholds of bigotry and superstition, and transferred the determination of the issue from the blind tribunal of prejudice and implicit faith to a totally different ground, the fair and open field of argument and inquiry.

On this ground a single champion is a match for thousands. The decision of the majority is not here enough : unanimity is absolutely necessary to infallibility ; for the only secure plea on which such a preposterous pretension could be set up is, by taking it for granted that there can be no possible doubt entertained upon the subject, and by diverting men's minds from ever asking themselves the question of the truth of certain dogmas and mysteries, any more than whether *two and two make four*. Prejudice in short is egotism : we see a part, and substitute it for the whole ; a thing strikes us casually and by halves, and we would have the universe stand proxy for our decision, in order to rivet it more firmly in our own belief ; however insufficient or sinister the grounds of our opinions, we would persuade ourselves that they arise out of the strongest conviction, and are entitled to unqualified approbation ; slaves of our own prejudices, caprice, ignorance, we would be lords of the understandings and reasons of others ; and (strange infatuation !) taking up an opinion solely from our own narrow and partial point of view, without consulting the feelings of others, or the reason of things, we are still uneasy if all the world do not come into our way of thinking.

ON CANT AND HYPOCRISY.

A Fragment.

"If to do were as easy as to teach others what were good to be done, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces."

Mr. Addison, it is said, was fond of tippling; and Curl, it is added, when he called on him in the morning, used to ask as a particular favour for a glass of Canary, by way of ingratiating himself, and that the other might have a pretence to join him and finish the bottle. He fell a martyr to this habit, and yet (some persons more nice than wise exclaim,) he desired that the young Earl of Warwick might attend him on his death-bed, "to see how a Christian could die!"

I see no inconsistency nor hypocrisy in this. A man may be a good Christian, a sound believer, and a sincere lover of virtue, and have, notwithstanding, one or more failings. If he had recommended it to others to get drunk, then I should have said he was a hypocrite, and that his pretended veneration for the Christian religion was a mere cloak put on to suit the purposes of fashion or convenience. His doing what it condemned was no proof of any such thing: "The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak." He is a hypocrite who professes what he does not believe; not he who does not practice all he wishes or approves.

It might on the same ground be argued, that a man is a hypocrite who admires Raphael or Shakspeare, because he cannot paint like the one, or write like the other. If any one really despised what he affected outwardly to admire,

this would be hypocrisy. If he affected to admire it a great deal more than he really did, this would be cant. Sincerity has to do with the connexion between our words and thoughts, and not between our belief and actions. The last constantly belie the strongest convictions and resolutions in the best of men ; it is only the base and dishonest who give themselves credit with their tongue for sentiments and opinions which in their hearts they disown.

I do not therefore think that the old theological maxim —" The greater the sinner, the greater the saint "—is so utterly unfounded. There is some mixture of truth in it. For as long as man is composed of two parts, body and soul ; and while these are allowed to pull different ways, I see no reason why, in proportion to the length the one goes, the opposition or reaction of the other should not be more violent.

It is certain, for example, that no one makes such good resolutions as the sot and the gambler in their moments of repentance, or can be more impressed with the horrors of their situation ;—should this disposition, instead of a transient, idle pang, by chance become lasting, who can be supposed to feel the beauty of temperance and economy more, or to look back with greater gratitude to their escape from the trammels of vice and passion ? Would the ingenious and elegant author of the SPECTATOR feel less regard for the Scriptures, because they denounced in pointed terms the infirmity that " most easily beset him," that was the torment of his life, and the cause of his death ?

Such reasoning would be true, if man was a simple animal or a logical machine, and all his faculties and impulses were in strict unison ; instead of which they are eternally at variance, and no one hates or takes part against himself more heartily or heroically than does the same individual. Does he not pass sentence on his own conduct ? Is not his conscience both judge and accuser ? What else is the meaning of all our resolutions against ourselves, as well as of our exhortations to others ? *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor,* is not the language of hypocrisy, but of human nature.

The hypocrisy of priests has been a butt for ridicule in all ages; but I am not sure that there has not been more wit than philosophy in it. A priest, it is true, is obliged to affect a greater degree of sanctity than ordinary men, and probably more than he possesses; and this is so far, I am willing to allow, hypocrisy and solemn grimace. But I cannot admit, that though he may exaggerate, or even make an ostentatious display of religion and virtue through habit and spiritual pride, that this is a proof he has not these sentiments in his heart, or that his whole behaviour is the mere acting of a part. His character, his motives, are not altogether pure and sincere: are they therefore all false and hollow? No such thing. It is contrary to all our observation and experience so to interpret it. We all wear some disguise—make some professions—use some artifice to set ourselves off as being better than we are; and yet it is not denied that we have some good intentions and praiseworthy qualities at bottom, though we may endeavour to keep some others that we think less to our credit as much as possible in the background:—why then should we not extend the same favourable construction to monks and friars, who may be sometimes caught tripping as well as other men—with less excuse, no doubt; but if it is also with greater remorse of conscience, which probably often happens, their pretensions are not all downright, barefaced imposture. Their sincerity, compared with that of other men, can only be judged of by the proportion between the degree of virtue they profess, and that which they practise, or at least carefully seek to realise. To conceive it otherwise, is to insist that characters must be all perfect, or all vicious—neither of which suppositions is even possible.

If a clergyman is notoriously a drunkard, a debauchee, a glutton, or a scoffer, then for him to lay claim at the same time to extraordinary inspirations of faith or grace, is both scandalous and ridiculous. The scene between the abbot and the poor brother in the "Duenna" is an admirable exposure of this double-faced dealing. But because a parson has a relish for the good things of this life, or what

is commonly called *a liquorish tooth in his head* (beyond what he would have it supposed by others, or even by himself), that he has therefore no fear or belief of the next, I hold for a crude and vulgar prejudice. If a poor half-starved parish priest pays his court to an *olla podrida*, or a venison pasty, with uncommon *gusto*, shall we say that he has no other sentiments in offering his devotions to a crucifix, or in counting his beads? I see no more ground for such an inference, than for affirming that Handel was not in earnest when he sat down to compose a Symphony, because he had at the same time perhaps a bottle of cordials in his cupboard; or that Raphael was not entitled to the epithet of *divine*, because he was attached to the Fornarina!

Everything has its turn in this chequered scene of things, unless we prevent it from taking its turn by over-rigid conditions, or drive men to despair or the most callous effrontery, by erecting a standard of perfection, to which no one can conform in reality! Thomson, in his "Castle of Indolence" (a subject on which his pen ran riot), has indulged in rather a free description of "a little round, fat, oily man of God—

> "Who shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
> If a tight damsel chanced to trippen by;
> Which, when observed, he shrunk into his mew,
> And straight would recollect his piety anew."

Now, was the piety in this case the less real, because it had been forgotten for a moment? Or even if this motive should not prove the strongest in the end, would this therefore show that it was none, which is necessary to the argument here combated, or to make out our little plump priest a very knave! A priest may be honest, and yet err; as a woman may be modest, and yet half-inclined to be a rake. So the virtue of prudes may be suspected, though not their sincerity. The strength of their passions may make them more conscious of their weakness, and more cautious of exposing themselves; but not more to blind others than as a guard upon themselves.

Again, suppose a clergyman hazards a jest upon sacred subjects, does it follow that he does not believe a word of the matter? Put the case that anyone else, encouraged by his example, takes up the banter or levity, and see what effect it will have upon the reverend divine. He will turn round like a serpent trod upon, with all the vehemence and asperity of the most bigoted orthodoxy. Is this dictatorial and exclusive spirit then put on merely as a mask and to browbeat others? No; but he thinks he is privileged to trifle with the subject safely himself, from the store of evidence he has in reserve, and from the nature of his functions; but he is afraid of serious consequences being drawn from what others might say, or from his seeming to countenance it; and the moment the Church is in danger, or his own faith brought in question, his attachment to each becomes as visible as his hatred to those who dare to inpugn either the one or the other.

A woman's attachment to her husband is not to be suspected, if she will allow no one to abuse him but herself! It has been remarked, that with the spread of liberal opinions, or a more general scepticism on articles of faith, the clergy and religious persons in general have become more squeamish and jealous of any objections to their favourite doctrines: but this is what must follow in the natural course of things—the resistance being always in proportion to the danger; and arguments and books that were formerly allowed to pass unheeded, because it was supposed impossible they could do any mischief, are now denounced or prohibited with the most zealous vigilance, from a knowledge of the contagious nature of their influence and contents. So in morals, it is obvious that the greatest nicety of expression and allusion must be observed, where the manners are the most corrupt, and the imagination most easily excited, not out of mere affectation, but as a dictate of common sense and decency.

One of the finest remarks that has been made in modern times, is that of Lord Shaftesbury, that there is no such thing as a perfect Theist, or an absolute Atheist; that whatever may be the general conviction entertained on the

subject, the evidence is not and cannot be at all times equally present to the mind ; that even if it were, we are not in the same humour to receive it : a fit of the gout, a shower of rain shakes our best-established conclusions ; and according to circumstances and the frame of mind we are in, our belief varies from the most sanguine enthusiasm to lukewarm indifference, or the most gloomy despair. There is a point of conceivable faith which might prevent any lapse from virtue, and reconcile all contrarieties between theory and practice ; but this is not to be looked for in the ordinary course of nature, and is reserved for the abodes of the blest. Here, " upon this bank and shoal of time," the utmost we can hope to attain is, a strong habitual belief in the excellence of virtue, or the dispensations of Providence ; and the conflict of the passions, and their occasional mastery over us, far from disproving or destroying this general, rational conviction, often fling us back more forcibly upon it, and like other infidelities or misunderstandings, produce all the alternate remorse and raptures of repentance and reconciliation.

It has been frequently remarked that the most obstinate heretic or confirmed sceptic, witnessing the service of the Roman Catholic church, the elevation of the host amidst the sounds of music, the pomp of ceremonies, the embellishments of art, feels himself spell-bound : and is almost persuaded to become a renegade to his reason or his religion. Even in hearing a vespers chaunted on the stage, or in reading an account of a torch-light procession in a romance, a superstitious awe creeps over the frame, and we are momentarily charmed out of ourselves.

When such is the obvious and involuntary influence of circumstances on the imagination, shall we say that a monkish recluse surrounded from his childhood by all this pomp, a stranger to any other faith, who has breathed no other atmosphere, and all whose meditations are bent on this one subject both by interest and habit and duty, is to be set down as a rank and heartless mountebank in the professions he makes of belief in it, because his thoughts may sometimes wander to forbidden subjects, or his feet

stumble on forbidden ground? Or shall not the deep shadows of the woods in Vallombrosa enhance the solemnity of this feeling, or the icy horrors of the Grand Chartreux add to its elevation and its purity? To argue otherwise is to misdeem of human nature, and to limit its capacities for good or evil by some narrow-minded standard of our own.

Man is neither a God nor a brute; but there is a prosaic and a poetical side to everything concerning him, and it is as impossible absolutely and for a constancy to exclude either one or the other from the mind, as to make him live without air or food. The *ideal*, the empire of thought and aspiration after truth and good, is inseparable from the nature of an intellectual being—what right have we then to catch at every strife which in the mortified professors of religion the spirit wages with the flesh as grossly vicious, or at every doubt, the bare suggestion of which fills them with consternation and despair, as a proof of the most glaring hypocrisy?

The grossnesses of religion and its stickling for mere forms as its essence, have given a handle, and a just one, to its impugners. At the feast of Ramadan (says Voltaire) the Mussulmans wash and pray five times a day, and then fall to cutting one another's throats again with the greatest deliberation and good-will. The two things, I grant, are sufficiently at variance; but they are, I contend, equally sincere in both. The Mahometans are savages, but they are not the less true believers—they hate their enemies as heartily as they revere the Koran. This, instead of showing the fallacy of the *ideal* principle, shows its universality and indestructible essence. Let a man be as bad as he will, as little refined as possible, and indulge whatever hurtful passions or gross vices he thinks proper, these cannot occupy the whole of his time; and in the intervals between one scoundrel action and another he may and must have better thoughts, and may have recourse to those of religion (true or false) among the number, without in this being guilty of hypocrisy or of making a jest of what is considered as sacred. This, I take it, is the whole secret of Methodism,

which is a sort of modern vent for the ebullitions of the spirit through the gaps of unrighteousness.

We often see that a person condemns in another the very thing he is guilty of himself. Is this hypocrisy? It may, or it may not. If he really feels none of the disgust and abhorrence he expresses, this is quackery and impudence. But if he really expresses what he feels (and he easily may, for it is the abstract idea he contemplates in the case of another, and the immediate temptation to which he yields in his own, so that he probably is not even conscious of the identity or connexion between the two), then this is not hypocrisy, but want of strength and keeping in the moral sense. All morality consists in squaring our actions and sentiments to our ideas of what is fit and proper; and it is the incessant struggle and alternate triumph of the two principles, the *ideal* and the physical, that keeps up this "mighty coil and pudder" about vice and virtue, and is one great source of the good and evil in the world.

The mind of man is like a clock that is always running down, and requires to be as constantly wound up. The *ideal* principle is the master-key that winds it up, and without which it would come to a stand: the sensual and selfish feelings are the dead weights that pull it down to the gross and grovelling. Till the intellectual faculty is destroyed (so that the mind sees nothing beyond itself, or the present moment), it is impossible to have all brutal depravity: till the material and physical are done away with (so that it shall contemplate everything from a purely spiritual and disinterested point of view), it is impossible to have all virtue. There must be a mixture of the two, as long as man is compounded of opposite materials, a contradiction and an eternal competition for the mastery. I by no means think a single bad action condemns a man, for he probably condemns it as much as you do; nor a single bad habit, for he is probably trying all his life to get rid of it. A man is only thoroughly profligate when he has lost the sense of right and wrong; or a thorough hypocrite, when he has not even the wish to be what he appears. The greatest offence against virtue is to speak ill

of it. To recommend certain things is worse than to practise them. There may be an excuse for the last in the frailty of passion ; but the former can arise from nothing but an utter depravity of disposition. Any one may yield to temptation, and yet feel a sincere love and aspiration after virtue : but he who maintains vice in theory, has not even the conception or capacity for virtue in his mind. Men err : fiends only make a mock at goodness.

ON A LANDSCAPE OF NICOLAS POUSSIN.

"And blind Orion hungry for the morn."

Orion, the subject of this landscape, was the classical Nimrod; and is called by Homer, "a hunter of shadows, himself a shade." He was the son of Neptune; and having lost an eye in some affray between the Gods and men, was told that if he would go to meet the rising sun, he would recover his sight. He is represented setting out on his journey, with men on his shoulders to guide him, a bow in his hand, and Diana in the clouds greeting him. He stalks along, a giant upon earth, and reels and falters in his gait, as if just awaked out of sleep, or uncertain of his way;—you see his blindness, though his back is turned. Mists rise around him, and veil the sides of the green forests; earth is dank and fresh with dews, the "grey dawn and the Pleiades before him dance," and in the distance are seen the blue hills and sullen ocean.

Nothing was ever more finely conceived or done. It breathes the spirit of the morning; its moisture, its repose, its obscurity, waiting the miracle of light to kindle it into smiles: the whole is, like the principal figure in it, "a forerunner of the dawn." The same atmosphere tinges and imbues every object, the same dull light "shadowy sets off" the face of nature: one feeling of vastness, of strangeness, and of primeval forms pervades the painter's canvas, and we are thrown back upon the first integrity of things. This great and learned man might be said to see nature through the glass of time: he alone has a right to be considered as the painter of classical antiquity.

Sir Joshua has done him justice in this respect. He could give to the scenery of his heroic fables that unimpaired look of original nature, full, solid, large, luxuriant, teeming with life and power; or deck it with all the pomp of art, with temples and towers, and mythologic groves. His pictures "denote a foregone conclusion." He applies nature to his purposes, works out her images according to the standard of his thoughts, embodies high fictions; and the first conception being given, all the rest seems to grow out of, and be assimilated to it, by the unfailing process of a studious imagination. Like his own Orion, he overlooks the surrounding scene, appears to "take up the isles as a very little thing, and to lay the earth in a balance." With a laborious and mighty grasp, he puts nature into the mould of the ideal and antique; and was among painters (more than any one else) what Milton was among poets.

There is in both something of the same pedantry, the same stiffness, the same elevation, the same grandeur, the same mixture of art and nature, the same richness of borrowed materials, the same unity of character. Neither the poet nor the painter lowered the subjects they treated, but filled up the outline in the fancy, and added strength and reality to it; and thus not only satisfied, but surpassed the expectations of the spectator and the reader. This is held for the triumph and the perfection of works of art. To give us nature, such as we see it, is well and deserving of praise; to give us nature, such as we have never seen, but have often wished to see it, is better, and deserving of higher praise.

He who can show the world in its first naked glory, with the hues of fancy spread over it, or in its high and palmy state, with the gravity of history stamped on the proud monuments of vanished empire,—who, by his "so potent art," can recal time past, transport us to distant places, and join the regions of imagination (a new conquest) to those of reality,—who shows us not only what nature is, but what she has been, and is capable of,—he who does this, and does it with simplicity, with truth, and grandeur,

is lord of nature and her powers ; and his mind is universal, and his art the master-art !

There is nothing in this " more than natural," if criticism could be persuaded to think so. The historic painter does not neglect or contravene nature, but follows her more closely up into her fantastic heights, or hidden recesses. He demonstrates what she would be in conceivable circumstances, and under implied conditions. He " gives to airy nothing a local habitation," not " a name." At his touch, words start up into images, thoughts become things. He clothes a dream, a phantom with form and colour and the wholesome attributes of reality. *His* art is a second nature ; not a different one.

There are those, indeed, who think that not to copy nature, is the rule for attaining perfection. Because they cannot paint the objects which they have seen, they fancy themselves qualified to paint the ideas which they have not seen. But it is possible to fail in this latter and more difficult style of imitation, as well as in the former humbler one. The detection, it is true, is not so easy, because the objects are not so nigh at hand to compare, and therefore there is more room both for false pretension and for self-deceit.

They take an epic motto or subject, and conclude that the spirit is implied as a thing of course. They paint inferior portraits, maudlin lifeless faces, without ordinary expression, or one look, feature, or particle of nature in them, and think that this is to rise to the truth of history. They vulgarise and degrade whatever is interesting or sacred to the mind, and suppose that they thus add to the dignity of their profession. They represent a face that seems as if no thought or feeling of any kind had ever passed through it, and would have you believe that this is the very sublime of expression, such as it would appear in heroes, or demi-gods of old, when rapture or agony was raised to its height. They show you a landscape that looks as if the sun never shone upon it, and tell you that it is not modern—that so earth looked when Titan first kissed it with his rays.

This is not the true *ideal*. It is not to fill the moulds of

the imagination, but to deface and injure them : it is not to come up to, but to fall short of the poorest conception in the public mind. Such pictures should not be hung in the same room with that of Orion*.

Poussin was, of all painters, the most poetical. He was the painter of ideas. No one ever told a story half so well, nor so well knew what was capable of being told by the pencil. He seized on, and struck off with grace and precision, just that point of view which would be likely to catch the reader's fancy. There is a significance, a consciousness in whatever he does (sometimes a vice, but oftener a virtue) beyond any other painter. His Giants sitting on the tops of craggy mountains, as huge themselves, and playing idly on their Pan's-pipes, seem to have been seated there these three thousand years, and to know the beginning and the end of their own story. An infant Bacchus or Jupiter is big with his future destiny.

* Every thing tends to show the manner in which a great artist is formed. If any person could claim an exemption from the careful imitation of individual objects, it was Nicolas Poussin. He studied the antique, but he also studied nature. " I have often admired," says Vignuel de Marville, who knew him at a late period of his life, " the love he had for his art. Old as he was, I frequently saw him among the ruins of ancient Rome, out in the Campagna, or along the banks of the Tyber, sketching a scene that had pleased him ; and I often met him with his handkerchief full of stones, moss, or flowers, which he carried home, that he might copy them exactly from nature. One day I asked him how he had attained to such a degree of perfection, as to have gained so high a rank among the great painters of Italy ? He answered, I HAVE NEGLECTED NOTHING."—*See his Life lately published.*

It appears from this account that he had not fallen into a recent error, that Nature puts the man of genius out. As a contrast to the foregoing description, I might mention, that I remember an old gentleman once asking Mr. West in the British Gallery, if he had ever been at Athens ? To which the President made answer, No ; nor did he feel any great desire to go ; for that he thought he had as good an idea of the place from the Catalogue, as he could get by living there for any number of years. What would he have said, if any one had told him, he could get as good an idea of the subject of one of his great works from reading the Catalogue of it, as from seeing the picture itself ! Yet the answer was characteristic of the genius of the painter.

Even inanimate and dumb things speak a language of their own. His snakes, the messengers of fate, are inspired with human intellect. His trees grow and expand their leaves in the air, glad of the rain, proud of the sun, awake to the winds of heaven. In his Plague of Athens, the very buildings seem stiff with horror. His picture of the Deluge is, perhaps, the finest historical landscape in the world. You see a waste of waters, wide, interminable : the sun is labouring, wan and weary, up the sky ; the clouds, dull and leaden, lie like a load upon the eye, and heaven and earth seem commingling into one confused mass !

His human figures are sometimes " o'er-informed " with this kind of feeling. Their actions have too much gesticulation, and the set impression of the features borders too much on the mechanical and caricatured style. In this respect, they form a contrast to Raphael's, whose figures never appear to be sitting for their pictures, or to be conscious of a spectator, or to have come from the painter's hand. In Nicolas Poussin, on the contrary, every thing seems to have a distinct understanding with the artist : " the very stones prate of their whereabout " : each object has its part and place assigned, and is in a sort of compact with the rest of the picture. It is this conscious keeping, and, as it were, *internal* design, that gives their peculiar character to the works of this artist.

There was a picture of Aurora in the British Gallery a year or two ago. It was a suffusion of golden light. The Goddess wore her saffron-coloured robes, and appeared just risen from the gloomy bed of old Tithonus. Her very steeds, milk-white, were tinged with the yellow dawn. It was a personification of the morning.

Poussin succeeded better in classic than in sacred subjects. The latter are comparatively heavy, forced, full of violent contrasts of colour, of red, blue, and black, and without the true prophetic inspiration of the characters. But in his Pagan allegories and fables he was quite at home. The native gravity and native levity of the Frenchman were combined with Italian scenery and an antique gusto, and gave even to his colouring an air of learned indifference.

He wants, in one respect, grace, form, expression; but he has every where sense and meaning, perfect costume and propriety. His personages always belong to the class and time represented, and are strictly versed in the business in hand.

His grotesque compositions in particular, his Nymphs and Fauns, are superior (at least, as far as style is concerned) even to those of Rubens. They are taken more immediately out of fabulous history. Rubens's Satyrs and Bacchantes have a more jovial and voluptuous aspect, are more drunk with pleasure, more full of animal spirits and riotous impulses; they laugh and bound along—

"Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant spring:"

but those of Poussin have more of the intellectual part of the character, and seem vicious on reflection, and of set purpose.

Rubens's are noble specimens of a class; Poussin's are allegorical abstractions of the same class, with bodies less pampered, but with minds more secretly depraved. The Bacchanalian groups of the Flemish painter were, however, his masterpieces in composition. Witness those prodigies of colour, character, and expression, at Blenheim. In the more chaste and refined delineation of classic fable, Poussin was without a rival. Rubens, who was a match for him in the wild and picturesque, could not pretend to vie with the elegance and purity of thought in his picture of Apollo giving a poet a cup of water to drink, nor with the gracefulness of design in the figure of a nymph squeezing the juice of a bunch of grapes from her fingers (a rosy wine-press) which falls into the mouth of a chubby infant below.

But, above all, who shall celebrate, in terms of fit praise, his picture of the shepherds in the Vale of Tempe going out in a fine morning of the spring, and coming to a tomb with this inscription:—ET EGO IN ARCADIA VIXI! The eager curiosity of some, the expression of others who start back with fear and surprise, the clear breeze playing with the branches of the shadowing trees, "the valleys low, where the mild zephyrs use," the distant, uninterrupted, sunny

prospect speak (and for ever will speak on) of ages past to ages yet to come* !

Pictures are a set of chosen images, a stream of pleasant thoughts passing through the mind. It is a luxury to have the walls of our rooms hung round with them, and no less so to have such a gallery in the mind, to con over the relics of ancient art bound up " within the book and volume of the brain, unmixed (if it were possible) with baser matter ! " A life passed among pictures, in the study and the love of art, is a happy noiseless dream : or rather, it is to dream and to be awake at the same time ; for it has all " the sober certainty of waking bliss," with the romantic voluptuousness of a visionary and abstracted being. They are the bright consummate essences of things, and " he who knows of these delights to taste and interpose them oft, is not unwise ! "

The Orion, which I have here taken occasion to descant upon, is one of a collection of excellent pictures, as this collection is itself one of a series from the old masters, which have for some years back embrowned the walls of the British Gallery, and enriched the public eye. What hues (those of nature mellowed by time) breathe around, as we enter ! What forms are there, woven into the memory ! What looks, which only the answering looks of the spectator can express ! What intellectual stores have been yearly poured forth from the shrine of ancient art ! The works are various, but the names the same— heaps of Rembrandts frowning from the darkened walls, Rubens's glad gorgeous groups, Titians more rich and rare, Claudes always exquisite, sometimes beyond compare, Guido's endless cloying sweetness, the learning of Poussin and the Caracci, and Raphael's princely magnificence, crowning all. We read certain letters and syllables in the

* Poussin has repeated this subject more than once, and appears to have revelled in its witcheries. I have before alluded to it, and may again. It is hard that we should not be allowed to dwell as often as we please on what delights us, when things that are disagreeable recur so often against our will.

catalogue, and at the well-known magic sound, a miracle of skill and beauty starts to view.

One might think that one year's prodigal display of such perfection would exhaust the labours of one man's life; but the next year, and the next to that, we find another harvest reaped and gathered in to the great garner of art, by the same immortal hands—

> "Old Genius the porter of them was;
> He letteth in, he letteth out to wend.—"

Their works seem endless as their reputation—to be many as they are complete—to multiply with the desire of the mind to see more and more of them; as if there were a living power in the breath of Fame, and in the very names of the great heirs of glory "there were propagation too!" It is something to have a collection of this sort to count upon once a year; to have one last, lingering look yet to come.

Pictures are scattered like stray gifts through the world; and while they remain, earth has yet a little gilding left, not quite rubbed off, dishonoured, and defaced. There are plenty of standard works still to be found in this country, in the collections at Blenheim, at Burleigh, and in those belonging to Mr. Angerstein, Lord Grosvenor, the Marquis of Stafford, and others, to keep up this treat to the lovers of art for many years: and it is the more desirable to reserve a privileged sanctuary of this sort, where the eye may dote, and the heart take its fill of such pictures as Poussin's Orion, since the Louvre is stripped of its triumphant spoils, and since he, who collected it, and wore it as a rich jewel in his Iron Crown, the hunter of greatness and of glory, is himself a shade!—

ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING.

I.

"There is a pleasure in painting which none but painters know." In writing, you have to contend with the world; in painting, you have only to carry on a friendly strife with Nature. You sit down to your task, and are happy. From the moment that you take up the pencil, and look Nature in the face, you are at peace with your own heart. No angry passions rise to disturb the silent progress of the work, to shake the hand, or dim the brow: no irritable humours are set afloat: you have no absurd opinions to combat, no point to strain, no adversary to crush, no fool to annoy—you are actuated by fear or favour to no man. There is "no juggling here," no sophistry, no intrigue, no tampering with the evidence, no attempt to make black white, or white black: but you resign yourself into the hands of a greater power, that of Nature, with the simplicity of a child, and the devotion of an enthusiast—"study with joy her manner, and with rapture taste her style."

The mind is calm, and full at the same time. The hand and eye are equally employed. In tracing the commonest object, a plant or the stump of a tree, you learn something every moment. You perceive unexpected differences, and discover likenesses where you looked for no such thing. You try to set down what you see—find out your error, and correct it. You need not play tricks, or purposely mistake: with all your pains, you are still far short of the mark.

Patience grows out of the endless pursuit, and turns it into a luxury. A streak in a flower, a wrinkle in a leaf, a tinge in a cloud, a stain in an old wall or ruin grey, are seized

with avidity as the *spolia opima* of this sort of mental warfare, and furnish out labour for another half day. The hours pass away untold, without chagrin, and without weariness; nor would you ever wish to pass them otherwise. Innocence is joined with industry, pleasure with business; and the mind is satisfied, though it is not engaged in thinking or in doing any mischief.*

I have not much pleasure in writing these Essays, or in reading them afterwards; though I own I now and then meet with a phrase that I like, or a thought that strikes me as a true one. But after I begin them, I am only anxious to get to the end of them, which I am not sure I shall do, for I seldom see my way a page or even a sentence beforehand; and when I have as by a miracle escaped, I trouble myself little more about them. I sometimes have

* There is a passage in Werter which contains a very pleasing illustration of this doctrine, and is as follows.

"About a league from the town is a place called Walheim. It is very agreeably situated on the side of a hill: from one of the paths which leads out of the village, you have a view of the whole country; and there is a good old woman who sells wine, coffee, and tea there: but better than all this are two lime-trees before the church, which spread their branches over a little green, surrounded by barns and cottages. I have seen few places more retired and peaceful. I send for a chair and table from the old woman's, and there I drink my coffee and read Homer.

It was by accident that I discovered this place one fine afternoon: all was perfect stillness; every body was in the fields, except a little boy about four years old, who was sitting on the ground, and holding between his knees a child of about six months; he pressed it to his bosom with his little arms, which made a sort of great chair for it, and notwithstanding the vivacity which sparkled in his eyes, he sat perfectly still.

Quite delighted with the scene, I sat down on a plough opposite, and had great pleasure in drawing this little picture of brotherly tenderness. I added a bit of the hedge, the barn-door, and some broken cart-wheels, without any order, just as they happened to lie; and in about an hour I found I had made a drawing of great expression and very correct design, without having put in any thing of my own. This confirmed me in the resolution I had made before, only to copy nature for the future. Nature is inexhaustible, and alone forms the greatest masters. Say what you will of rules, they alter the true features, and the natural expression." Page 15.

to write them twice over : then it is necessary to read the *proof*, to prevent mistakes by the printer ; so that by the time they appear in a tangible shape, and one can con them over with a conscious, sidelong glance to the public approbation, they have lost their gloss and relish, and become " more tedious than a twice-told tale."

For a person to read his own works over with any great delight, he ought first to forget that he ever wrote them. Familiarity naturally breeds contempt. It is, in fact, like poring fondly over a piece of blank paper : from repetition, the words convey no distinct meaning to the mind, are mere idle sounds, except that our vanity claims an interest and property in them. I have more satisfaction in my own thoughts than in dictating them to others : words are necessary to explain the impression of certain things upon me to the reader, but they rather weaken and draw a veil over than strengthen it to myself. However I might say with the poet, " My mind to me a kingdom is," yet I have little ambition " to set a throne or chair of state in the understandings of other men."

The ideas we cherish most, exist best in a kind of shadowy abstraction,

"Pure in the last recesses of the mind ;"

and derive neither force nor interest from being exposed to public view. They are old familiar acquaintance, and any change in them, arising from adventitious ornaments of style or dress, is little to their advantage. After I have once written on a subject, it goes out of my mind : my feelings about it have been melted down into words, and *them* I forget. I have, as it were, discharged my memory of its old habitual reckoning, and rubbed out the score of real sentiment. For the future, it exists only for the sake of others.

But I cannot say, from my own experience, that the same process takes place in transferring our ideas to canvas ; they gain more than they lose in the mechanical transformation. One is never tired of painting, because you have to set down not what you knew already, but what you have

just discovered. In the former case, you translate feelings into words; in the latter, names into things. There is a continual creation out of nothing going on. With every stroke of the brush, a new field of inquiry is laid open; new difficulties arise, and new triumphs are prepared over them. By comparing the imitation with the original, you see what you have done, and how much you have still to do.

The test of the senses is severer than that of fancy, and an over-match even for the delusions of our self-love. One part of a picture shames another, and you determine to paint up to yourself, if you cannot come up to nature. Every object becomes lustrous from the light thrown back upon it by the mirror of art: and by the aid of the pencil we may be said to touch and handle the objects of sight. The air-drawn visions that hover on the verge of existence have a bodily presence given them on the canvas: the form of beauty is changed into a substance: the dream and the glory of the universe is made "palpable to feeling as to sight."

And see! a rainbow starts from the canvas, with all its humid train of glory, as if it were drawn from its cloudy arch in heaven. The spangled landscape glitters with drops of dew after the shower. The "fleecy fools" show their coats in the gleam of the setting sun. The shepherds pipe their farewell notes in the fresh evening air. And is this bright vision made from a dead dull blank, like a bubble reflecting the mighty fabric of the universe? Who would think this miracle of Rubens' pencil possible to be performed? Who, having seen it, would not spend his life to do the like? See how the rich fallows, the bare stubble-field, the scanty harvest-home, drag in Rembrandt's landscapes! How often have I looked at them and nature, and tried to do the same, till the very "light thickened," and there was an earthiness in the feeling of the air!

There is no end of the refinements of art and nature in this respect. One may look at the misty glimmering horizon till the eye dazzles and the imagination is lost, in hopes to transfer the whole interminable expanse at one blow upon canvas. Wilson said, he used to try to paint

the effect of the motes dancing in the setting sun. At another time, a friend coming into his painting-room when he was sitting on the ground in a melancholy posture, observed that his picture looked like a landscape after a shower : he started up with the greatest delight, and said, " That is the effect I intended to produce, but thought I had failed."

Wilson was neglected ; and, by degrees, neglected his art to apply himself to brandy. His hand became unsteady, so that it was only by repeated attempts that he could reach the place, or produce the effect he aimed at ; and when he had done a little to a picture, he would say to any acquaintance who chanced to drop in, " I have painted enough for one day : come, let us go somewhere."

It was not so Claude left his pictures, or his studies on the banks of the Tiber, to go in search of other enjoyments, or ceased to gaze upon the glittering sunny vales and distant hills ; and while his eye drank in the clear sparkling hues and lovely forms of nature, his hand stamped them on the lucid canvas to last there for ever !

One of the most delightful parts of my life was one fine summer, when I used to walk out of an evening to catch the last light of the sun, gemming the green slopes or russet lawns, and gilding tower or tree, while the blue sky gradually turning to purple and gold, or skirted with dusky grey, hung its broad marble pavement over all, as we see it in the great master of Italian landscape. But to come to a more particular explanation of the subject.

The first head I ever tried to paint was an old woman with the upper part of the face shadowed by her bonnet, and I certainly laboured it with great perseverance. It took me numberless sittings to do it. I have it by me still, and sometimes look at it with surprise, to think how much pains were thrown away to little purpose,—yet not altogether in vain if it taught me to see good in every thing, and to know that there is nothing vulgar in nature seen with the eye of science or of true art.

Refinement creates beauty everwhere : it is the grossness of the spectator that discovers nothing but grossness

in the object. Be this as it may, I spared no pains to do my best. If art was long, I thought that life was so too at that moment. I got in the general effect the first day; and pleased and surprised enough I was at my success. The rest was a work of time—of weeks and months (if need were) of patient toil and careful finishing.

I had seen an old head by Rembrandt at Burleigh-House, and if I could produce a head at all like Rembrandt in a year, in my life-time, it would be glory and felicity, and wealth and fame enough for me! The head I had seen at Burleigh was an exact and wonderful fac-simile of nature, and I resolved to make mine (as nearly as I could) an exact fac-simile of nature.

I did not then, nor do I now believe, with Sir Joshua, that the perfection of art consists in giving general appearances without individual details, but in giving general appearances with individual details. Otherwise, I had done my work the first day. But I saw something more in nature than general effect, and I thought it worth my while to give it in the picture. There was a gorgeous effect of light and shade: but there was a delicacy as well as depth in the *chiaro scuro*, which I was bound to follow into all its dim and scarce perceptible variety of tone and shadow. Then I had to make the transition from a strong light to as dark a shade, preserving the masses, but gradually softening off the intermediate parts. It was so in nature: the difficulty was to make it so in the copy.

I tried, and failed again and again; I strove harder, and succeeded as I thought. The wrinkles in Rembrandt were not hard lines; but broken and irregular. I saw the same appearance in nature, and strained every nerve to give it. If I could hit off this edgy appearance, and insert the reflected light in the furrows of old age in half a morning, I did not think I had lost a day. Beneath the shrivelled yellow parchment look of the skin, there was here and there a streak of the blood colour tinging the face; this I made a point of conveying, and did not cease to compare what I saw with what I did (with jealous lynx-eyed watchfulness) till I succeeded to the best of my ability and judgment.

How many revisions were there! How many attempts to catch an expression which I had seen the day before! How often did we try to get the old position, and wait for the return of the same light! There was a puckering up of the lips, a cautious introversion of the eye under the shadow of the bonnet, indicative of the feebleness and suspicion of old age, which at last we managed, after many trials and some quarrels, to a tolerable nicety. The picture was never finished, and I might have gone on with it to the present hour*. I used to set it on the ground when my day's work was done, and saw revealed to me with swimming eyes the birth of new hopes, and of a new world of objects.

The painter thus learns to look at nature with different eyes. He before saw her "as in a glass darkly, but now face to face." He understands the texture and meaning of the visible universe, and "sees into the life of things," not by the help of mechanical instruments, but of the improved exercise of his faculties, and an intimate sympathy with nature. The meanest thing is not lost upon him, for he looks at it with an eye to itself, not merely to his own vanity or interest, or the opinions of the world. Even where there is neither beauty nor use—if that ever were—still there is truth, and a sufficient source of gratification in the indulgence of curiosity and activity of mind. The humblest painter is a true scholar; and the best of scholars —the scholar of nature.

For myself, and for the real comfort and satisfaction of the thing, I had rather have been Jan Steen, or Gerard Dow, than the greatest casuist or philologer that ever lived. The painter does not view things in clouds or "mist, the common gloss of theologians," but applies the same standard of truth and disinterested spirit of inquiry, that influence his daily practice, to other subjects. He perceives form, he distinguishes character. He reads men and books with an intuitive eye. He is a critic as well as a connoisseur. The conclusions he draws are clear and

* It is at present covered with a thick slough of oil and varnish (the perishable vehicle of the English school) like an envelope of gold-beaters' skin, so as to be hardly visible.

convincing, because they are taken from the things themselves. He is not a fanatic, a dupe, or a slave : for the habit of seeing for himself also disposes him to judge for himself.

The most sensible men I know (taken as a class) are painters ; that is, they are the most lively observers of what passes in the world about them, and the closest observers of what passes in their own minds. From their profession they in general mix more with the world than authors ; and if they have not the same fund of acquired knowledge, are obliged to rely more on individual sagacity. I might mention the names of Opie, Fuseli, Northcote, as persons distinguished for striking description and acquaintance with the subtle traits of character*.

Painters in ordinary society, or in obscure situations where their value is not known, and they are treated with neglect and indifference, have sometimes a forward self-sufficiency of manner : but this is not so much their fault as that of others. Perhaps their want of regular education may also be in fault in such cases.

Richardson, who is very tenacious of the respect in which the profession ought to be held, tells a story of Michael Angelo, that after a quarrel between him and the Pope Julius II. " upon account of a slight the artist conceived the pontiff had put upon him, Michael Angelo was introduced by a bishop, who, thinking to serve the artist by it, made it an argument that the Pope should be reconciled to him, because men of his profession were commonly ignorant, and of no consequence otherwise : his holiness, enraged at the bishop, struck him with his staff, and told him, it was he that was the blockhead, and affronted the man himself would not offend ; the prelate was driven out

* Men in business, who are answerable with their fortunes for the consequences of their opinions, and are therefore accustomed to ascertain pretty accurately the grounds on which they act, before they commit themselves on the event, are often men of remarkably quick and sound judgments. Artists in like manner must know tolerably well what they are about, before they can bring the result of their observations to the test of ocular demonstration.

of the chamber, and Michael Angelo had the Pope's benediction accompanied with presents. This bishop had fallen into the vulgar error, and was rebuked accordingly."

Besides the exercise of the mind, painting exercises the body. It is a mechanical as well as a liberal art. To do any thing, to dig a hole in the ground, to plant a cabbage, to hit a mark, to move a shuttle, to work a pattern,—in a word, to attempt to produce any effect, and to *succeed*, has something in it that gratifies the love of power, and carries off the restless activity of the mind of man.

Indolence is a delightful but distressing state : we must be doing something to be happy. Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame ; and painting combines them both incessantly*. The hand furnishes a practical test of the correctness of the eye ; and the eye thus admonished, imposes fresh tasks of skill and industry upon the hand. Every stroke tells, as the verifying of a new truth ; and every new observation, the instant it is made, passes into an act and emanation of the will. Every step is nearer what we wish, and yet there is always more to do. In spite of the facility, the fluttering grace, the evanescent hues, that play round the pencil of Rubens and Vandyke, however I may admire, I do not envy them this power so much as I do the slow, patient, laborious execution of Correggio, Leonardo da Vinci, and Andrea del Sarto, where every touch appears conscious of its charge, emulous of truth, and where the painful artist has so distinctly wrought,

"That you might almost say his picture thought !"

In the one case, the colours seem breathed on the canvas as by magic, the work and the wonder of a moment : in the other, they seem inlaid in the body of the work, and as if it took the artist years of unremitting labour, and of

* The famous Schiller used to say, that he found the great happiness of life, after all, to consist in the discharge of some mechanical duty.

delightful never-ending progress to perfection*. Who would wish ever to come to the close of such works,—not to dwell on them, to return to them, to be wedded to them to the last? Rubens, with his florid, rapid style, complained that when he had just learned his art, he should be forced to die. Leonardo, in the slow advances of his, had lived long enough!

Painting is not, like writing, what is properly understood by a sedentary employment. It requires not indeed a strong, but a continued and steady exertion of muscular power. The precision and delicacy of the manual operation makes up for the want of vehemence,—as to balance himself for any time in the same position the rope-dancer must strain every nerve. Painting for a whole morning gives one as excellent an appetite for one's dinner, as old Abraham Tucker acquired for his by riding over Banstead Downs.

It is related of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that "he took no other exercise than what he used in his painting-room," —the writer means, in walking backwards and forwards to look at his picture; but the act of painting itself, of laying on the colours in the proper place, and proper quantity, was a much harder exercise than this alternate receding from and returning to the picture. This last would be rather a relaxation and relief than an effort. It is not to be wondered at, that an artist like Sir Joshua, who delighted so much in the sensual and practical part of his art, should have found himself at a considerable loss when the decay of his sight precluded him, for the last year or two of his life, from the following up of his profession,— "the source," according to his own remark, "of thirty years' uninterrupted enjoyment and prosperity to him." It is only those who never think at all, or else who have accustomed themselves to brood incessantly on abstract ideas, that never feel *ennui*.

* The rich *impasting* of Titian and Giorgione combines something of the advantages of both these styles, the felicity of the one with the carefulness of the other, and is perhaps to be preferred to either.

To give one instance more, and then I will have done with this rambling discourse. One of my first attempts was a picture of my father, who was then in a green old age, with strong-marked features, and scarred with the small-pox. I drew it with a broad light crossing the face, looking down, with spectacles on, reading. The book was Shaftesbury's Characteristics, in fine old binding, with Gribelin's etchings. My father would as lieve it had been any other book; but for him to read was to be content, was "riches fineless."

The sketch promised well; and I set to work to finish it, determined to spare no time nor pains. My father was willing to sit as long as I pleased; for there is a natural desire in the mind of man to sit for one's picture, to be the object of continued attention, to have one's likeness multiplied; and besides his satisfaction in the picture, he had some pride in the artist, though he would rather I should have written a sermon than painted like Rembrandt or like Raphael.

Those winter days, with the gleams of sunshine coming through the chapel-windows, and cheered by the notes of the robin-redbreast in our garden (that "ever in the haunch of winter sings")—as my afternoon's work drew to a close,—were among the happiest of my life. When I gave the effect I intended to any part of the picture for which I had prepared my colours, when I imitated the roughness of the skin by a lucky stroke of the pencil, when I hit the clear pearly tone of a vein, when I gave the ruddy complexion of health, the blood circulating under the broad shadows of one side of the face, I thought my fortune made: or rather it was already more than made, in my fancying that I might one day be able to say with Correggio, "*I also am a painter*!" It was an idle thought, a boy's conceit; but it did not make me less happy at the time. I used regularly to set my work in the chair to look at it through the long evenings; and many a time did I return to take leave of it before I could go to bed at night.

I remember sending it with a throbbing heart to the Exhibition, and seeing it hung up there by the side of one

of the Honourable Mr. Skeffington (now Sir George). There was nothing in common between them, but that they were the portraits of two very good-natured men. I think, but am not sure, that I finished this portrait (or another afterwards) on the same day that the news of the battle of Austerlitz came; I walked out in the afternoon, and, as I returned, saw the evening star set over a poor man's cottage with other thoughts and feelings than I shall ever have again. Oh for the revolution of the great Platonic year, that those times might come over again! I could sleep out the three hundred and sixty-five thousand intervening years very contentedly!

The picture is left: the table, the chair, the window where I learned to construe Livy, the chapel where my father preached, remain where they were; but he himself is gone to rest, full of years, of faith, of hope, and charity!

ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING.
II.

The painter not only takes a delight in nature, he has a new and exquisite source of pleasure opened to him in the study and contemplation of works of art—

> "Whate'er Lorraine light touch'd with soft'ning hue,
> Or savage Rosa dash'd, or learned Poussin drew."

He turns aside to view a country-gentleman's seat with eager looks, thinking it may contain some of the rich products of art. There is an air round Lord Radnor's park, for there hang the two Claudes, the Morning and Evening of the Roman Empire—round Wilton-house, for there is Vandyke's picture of the Pembroke family—round Blenheim, for there is his picture of the Duke of Buckingham's children, and the most magnificent collection of Rubenses in the world—at Knowsley, for there is Rembrandt's Hand-writing on the Wall—and at Burleigh, for there are some of Guido's angelic heads.

The young artist makes a pilgrimage to each of these places, eyes them wistfully at a distance, "bosomed high in tufted trees," and feels an interest in them of which the owner is scarce conscious: he enters the well-swept walks and echoing arch-ways, passes the threshold, is led through wainscoted rooms, is shown the furniture, the rich hangings, the tapestry, the massy services of plate—and, at last, is ushered into the room where his treasure is, the idol of his vows—some speaking face or bright landscape! It is stamped on his brain, and lives there thenceforward, a tally for nature, and a test of art. He furnishes out the chambers of the mind from the spoils of time, picks and

chooses which shall have the best places—nearest his heart. He goes away richer than he came, richer than the possessor; and thinks that he may one day return, when he perhaps shall have done something like them, or even from failure shall have learned to admire truth and genius more.

My first initiation in the mysteries of the art was at the Orleans Gallery: it was there I formed my taste, such as it is; so that I am irreclaimably of the old school in painting. I was staggered when I saw the works there collected, and looked at them with wondering and with longing eyes. A mist passed away from my sight: the scales fell off. A new sense came upon me, a new heaven and a new earth stood before me. I saw the soul speaking in the face—"hands that the rod of empire had swayed" in mighty ages past—"a forked mountain or blue promontory,"

> "——with trees upon't
> That nod unto the world, and mock our eyes with air."

Old Time had unlocked his treasures, and Fame stood portress at the door. We had all heard of the names of Titian, Raphael, Guido, Domenichino, the Caracci—but to see them face to face, to be in the same room with their deathless productions, was like breaking some mighty spell —was almost an effect of necromancy!

From that time I lived in a world of pictures. Battles, sieges, speeches in parliament seemed mere idle noise and fury, "signifying nothing," compared with those mighty works and dreaded names that spoke to me in the eternal silence of thought. This was the more remarkable, as it was but a short time before that I was not only totally ignorant of, but insensible to the beauties of art. As an instance, I remember that one afternoon I was reading the Provoked Husband with the highest relish, with a green woody landscape of Ruysdael or Hobbima just before me, at which I looked off the book now and then, and wondered what there could be in that sort of work to satisfy or delight the mind—at the same time asking myself, as a speculative question, whether I should ever feel an interest in it like what I took in reading Vanbrugh and Cibber?

I had made some progress in painting when I went to the Louvre to study, and I never did any thing afterwards. I never shall forget conning over the Catalogue which a friend lent me just before I set out. The pictures, the names of the painters, seemed to relish in the mouth. There was one of Titian's Mistress at her toilette. Even the colours with which the painter had adorned her hair were not more golden, more amiable to sight, than those which played round and tantalised my fancy ere I saw the picture.

There were two portraits by the same hand—" A young Nobleman with a glove "—Another, " a companion to it " —I read the description over and over with fond expectancy, and filled up the imaginary outline with whatever I could conceive of grace, and dignity, and an antique *gusto* —all but equal to the original. There was the Transfiguration too. With what awe I saw it in my mind's eye, and was overshadowed with the spirit of the artist ! Not to have been disappointed with these works afterwards, was the highest compliment I can pay to their transcendant merits. Indeed, it was from seeing other works of the same great masters that I had formed a vague, but no disparaging idea of these.

The first day I got there, I was kept for some time in the French Exhibition-room, and thought I should not be able to get a sight of the old masters. I just caught a peep at them through the door (vile hindrance !) like looking out of purgatory into paradise—from Poussin's noble mellow-looking landscapes to where Rubens hung out his gaudy banner, and down the glimmering vista to the rich jewels of Titian and the Italian school. At last, by much importunity, I was admitted, and lost not an instant in making use of my new privilege.

It was *un beau jour* to me. I marched delighted through a quarter of a mile of the proudest efforts of the mind of man, a whole creation of genius, a universe of art ! I ran the gauntlet of all the schools from the bottom to the top ; and in the end got admitted into the inner room, where they had been repairing some of their greatest works. Here

the Transfiguration, the St. Peter Martyr, and the St. Jerome of Domenichino stood on the floor, as if they had bent their knees, like camels stooping, to unlade their riches to the spectator. On one side, on an easel, stood Hippolito de Medici (a portrait by Titian) with a boar-spear in his hand, looking through those he saw, till you turned away from the keen glance : and thrown together in heaps were landscapes of the same hand, green pastoral hills and vales, and shepherds piping to their mild mistresses underneath the flowering shade.

Reader, "if thou hast not seen the Louvre, thou art damned!"—for thou hast not seen the choicest remains of the works of art ; or thou hast not seen all these together, with their mutually reflected glories. I say nothing of the statues ; for I know but little of sculpture, and never liked any till I saw the Elgin marbles . . . Here, for four months together, I strolled and studied, and daily heard the warning sound—"*Quatre heures passées, il faut fermer, Citoyens,*" (ah! why did they ever change their style?) muttered in coarse provincial French ; and brought away with me some loose draughts and fragments, which I have been forced to part with, like drops of life-blood, for "hard money." How often, thou tenantless mansion of godlike magnificence—how often has my heart since gone a pilgrimage to thee!

It has been made a question, whether the artist, or the mere man of taste and natural sensibility, receives most pleasure from the contemplation of works of art? and I think this question might be answered by another as a sort of *experimentum crucis*, namely, whether any one out of that "number numberless" of mere gentlemen and amateurs, who visited Paris at the period here spoken of, felt as much interest, as much pride or pleasure in this display of the most striking monuments of art as the humblest student would? The first entrance into the Louvre would be only one of the events of his journey, not an event in his life, remembered ever after with thankfulness and regret. He would explore it with the same unmeaning curiosity and idle wonder as he would the Regalia in the Tower, or

the Botanic Garden in the Thuilleries, but not with the fond enthusiasm of an artist. How should he? His is "casual fruition, joyless, unendeared."

But the painter is wedded to his art, the mistress, queen, and idol of his soul. He has embarked his all in it, fame, time, fortune, peace of mind, his hopes in youth, his consolation in age: and shall he not feel a more intense interest in whatever relates to it than the mere indolent trifler? Natural sensibility alone, without the entire application of the mind to that one object, will not enable the possessor to sympathise with all the degrees of beauty and power in the conception of a Titian or a Correggio; but it is he only who does this, who follows them into all their force and matchless grace, that does or can feel their full value. Knowledge is pleasure as well as power. No one but the artist who has studied nature and contended with the difficulties of art, can be aware of the beauties, or intoxicated with a passion for painting. No one who has not devoted his life and soul to the pursuit of art, can feel the same exultation in its brightest ornaments and loftiest triumphs which an artist does. Where the treasure is, there the heart is also.

It is now seventeen years since I was studying in the Louvre (and I have long since given up all thoughts of the art as a profession), but long after I returned, and even still, I sometimes dream of being there again—of asking for the old pictures—and not finding them, or finding them changed or faded from what they were, I cry myself awake! What gentleman-amateur ever does this at such a distance of time,—that is, ever received pleasure or took interest enough in them to produce so lasting an impression?

But it is said that if a person had the same natural taste, and the same acquired knowledge as an artist, without the petty interests and technical notions, he would derive a purer pleasure from seeing a fine portrait, a fine landscape, and so on. This however is not so much begging the question as asking an impossibility: he cannot have the same insight into the end without having studied the means; nor the same love of art without the same habitual and

exclusive attachment to it. Painters are, no doubt, often actuated by jealousy, partiality, and a sordid attention to that only which they find useful to themselves in painting. W—— has been seen poring over the texture of a Dutch cabinet-picture, so that he could not see the picture itself. But this is the perversion and pedantry of the profession, not its true or genuine spirit. If W—— had never looked at any thing but megilps and handling, he never would have put the soul of life and manners into his pictures, as he has done.

Another objection is, that the instrumental parts of the art, the means, the first rudiments, paints, oils, and brushes, are painful and disgusting; and that the consciousness of the difficulty and anxiety with which perfection has been attained, must take away from the pleasure of the finest performance. This, however, is only an additional proof of the greater pleasure derived by the artist from his profession; for these things which are said to interfere with and destroy the common interest in works of art, do not disturb him; he never once thinks of them, he is absorbed in the pursuit of a higher object; he is intent, not on the means but the end; he is taken up, not with the difficulties, but with the triumph over them. As in the case of the anatomist, who overlooks many things in the eagerness of his search after abstract truth; or the alchemist who, while he is raking into his soot and furnaces, lives in a golden dream; a lesser gives way to a greater object.

But it is pretended that the painter may be supposed to submit to the unpleasant part of the process only for the sake of the fame or profit in view. So far is this from being a true state of the case, that I will venture to say, in the instance of a friend of mine who has lately succeeded in an important undertaking in his art, that not all the fame he has acquired, not all the money he has received from thousands of admiring spectators, not all the newspaper puffs,—nor even the praise of the Edinburgh Review,—not all these, put together, ever gave him at any time the same genuine, undoubted satisfaction as any one half-hour employed in the ardent and propitious pursuit of his art—

in finishing to his heart's content a foot, a hand, or even a piece of drapery.

What is the state of mind of an artist while he is at work? He is then in the act of realising the highest idea he can form of beauty or grandeur: he conceives, he embodies that which he understands and loves best: that is, he is in full and perfect possession of that which is to him the source of the highest happiness and intellectual excitement which he can enjoy.

In short, as a conclusion to this argument, I will mention a circumstance which fell under my knowledge the other day. A friend had bought a print of Titian's Mistress, the same to which I have alluded above. He was anxious to shew it me on this account. I told him it was a spirited engraving, but it had not the look of the original. I believe he thought this fastidious, till I offered to shew him a rough sketch of it, which I had by me. Having seen this, he said he perceived exactly what I meant, and could not bear to look at the print afterwards. He had good sense enough to see the difference in the individual instance; but a person better acquainted with Titian's manner and with art in general, that is, of a more cultivated and refined taste, would know that it was a bad print, without having any immediate model to compare it with. He would perceive with a glance of the eye, with a sort of instinctive feeling, that it was hard, and without that bland, expansive, and nameless expression which always distinguished Titian's most famous works.

Any one who is accustomed to a head in a picture can never reconcile himself to a print from it: but to the ignorant they are both the same. To a vulgar eye there is no difference between a Guido and a daub, between a penny-print or the vilest scrawl, and the most finished performance. In other words, all that excellence which lies between these two extremes,—all, at least, that marks the excess above mediocrity,—all that constitutes true beauty, harmony, refinement, grandeur, is lost upon the common observer.

But it is from this point that the delight, the glowing

raptures of the true adept commence. An uninformed spectator may like an ordinary drawing better than the ablest connoisseur; but for that very reason he cannot like the highest specimens of art so well. The refinements not only of execution but of truth and nature are inaccessible to unpractised eyes. The exquisite gradations in a sky of Claude's are not perceived by such persons, and consequently the harmony cannot be felt. Where there is no conscious apprehension, there can be no conscious pleasure. Wonder at the first sight of works of art may be the effect of ignorance and novelty; but real admiration and permanent delight in them are the growth of taste and knowledge.

"I would not wish to have your eyes," said a good-natured man to a critic, who was finding fault with a picture, in which the other saw no blemish. Why so? The idea which prevented him from admiring this inferior production was a higher idea of truth and beauty which was ever present with him, and a continual source of pleasing and lofty contemplations. It may be different in a taste for outward luxuries and the privations of mere sense; but the idea of perfection, which acts as an intellectual foil, is always an addition, a support, and a proud consolation!

Richardson, in his Essays, which ought to be better known, has left some striking examples of the felicity and infelicity of artists, both as it relates to their external fortune, and to the practice of their art. In speaking of *the knowledge of hands*, he exclaims—"When one is considering a picture or a drawing, one at the same time thinks this was done by him* who had many extraordinary endowments of body and mind, but was withal very capricious; who was honoured in life and death, expiring in the arms of one of the greatest princes of that age, Francis I. King of France, who loved him as a friend. Another is of him† who lived a long and happy life, beloved of Charles V. emperour; and many others of the first princes of Europe.

* Leonardo da Vinci. † Titian.

"When one has another in hand, we think this was done by one* who so excelled in three arts, as that any of them in that degree had rendered him worthy of immortality; and one moreover that durst contend with his sovereign (one of the haughtiest popes that ever was) upon a slight offered to him, and extricated himself with honour. Another is the work of him† who, without any one exterior advantage but mere strength of genius, had the most sublime imaginations, and executed them accordingly, yet lived and died obscurely.

"Another we shall consider as the work of him‡ who restored Painting when it had almost sunk; of him whom art made honourable, but who, neglecting and despising greatness with a sort of cynical pride, was treated suitably to the figure he gave himself, not his intrinsic worth; which, not having philosophy enough to bear it, broke his heart. Another is done by one§ who (on the contrary) was a fine gentleman, and lived in great magnificence, and was much honoured by his own and foreign princes; who was a courtier, a statesman, and a painter; and so much all these, that when he acted in either character, *that* seemed to be his business, and the others his diversion. I say when one thus reflects, besides the pleasure arising from the beauties and excellences of the work, the fine ideas it gives us of natural things, the noble way of thinking it may suggest to us, an additional pleasure results from the above considerations."

"But, oh! the pleasure, when a connoisseur and lover of art has before him a picture or drawing, of which he can say this is the hand, these are the thoughts of him‖ who was one of the politest, best-natured gentlemen that ever was; and beloved and assisted by the greatest wits and the greatest men then in Rome: of him who lived in great fame, honour, and magnificence, and died extremely lamented; and missed a Cardinal's hat only by dying a few months too soon; but was particularly esteemed and

* Michael Angelo.
† Correggio.
‡ Annibal Caracci.
§ Rubens.
‖ Rafaelle.

favoured by two Popes, the only ones who filled the chair of St. Peter in his time, and as great men as ever sat there since that apostle, if at least he ever did: one, in short, who could have been a Leonardo, a Michael Angelo, a Titian, a Correggio, a Parmegiano, an Annibal, a Rubens, or any other whom he pleased, but none of them could ever have been a Rafaelle." Page 251.

The same writer speaks feelingly of the change in the style of different artists from their change of fortune, and as the circumstances are little known, I will quote the passage relating to two of them.

"Guido Reni from a prince-like affluence of fortune (the just reward of his angelic works) fell to a condition like that of a hired servant to one who supplied him with money for what he did at a fixed rate; and that by his being bewitched with a passion for gaming, whereby he lost vast sums of money; and even what he got in this his state of servitude by day, he commonly lost at night: nor could he ever be cured of this cursed madness. Those of his works, therefore, which he did in this unhappy part of his life, may easily be conceived to be in a different style to what he did before, which in some things, that is, in the airs of his heads (in the gracious kind), had a delicacy in them peculiar to himself, and almost more than human.

"But I must not multiply instances. Parmegiano is one that alone takes in all the several kinds of variation, and all the degrees of goodness, from the lowest of the indifferent up to the sublime. I can produce evident proofs of this in so easy a gradation, that one cannot deny but that he that did this, might do that, and very probably did so; and thus one may ascend and descend, like the angels on Jacob's ladder, whose foot was upon the earth, but its top reached to Heaven.

"And this great man had his unlucky circumstance: he became mad after the philosopher's stone, and did but very little in painting or drawing afterwards. Judge what that was, and whether there was not an alteration of style from what he had done, before this devil possessed him. His creditors endeavoured to exorcise him, and did him some

good, for he set himself to work again in his own way : but if a drawing I have of a Lucretia be that he made for his last picture, as it probably is (Vasari says that was the subject of it), it is an evident proof of his decay : it is good indeed, but it wants much of the delicacy which is commonly seen in his works ; and so I always thought before I knew or imagined it to be done in this his ebb of genius." Page 153.

We have had two artists of our own country, whose fate has been as singular as it was hard. Gandy was a portrait-painter in the beginning of the last century, whose heads were said to have come near to Rembrandt's, and he was the undoubted prototype of Sir Joshua Reynolds's style. Yet his name has scarcely been heard of ; and his reputation, like his works, never extended beyond his own country. What did he think of himself and of a fame so bounded ! Did he ever dream he was indeed an artist ? Or how did this feeling in him differ from the vulgar conceit of the lowest pretender ? The best known of his works is a portrait of an alderman of Exeter, in some public building in that city.

Poor Dan. Stringer ! Forty years ago he had the finest hand and the clearest eye of any artist of his time, and produced heads and drawings that would not have disgraced a brighter period in the art. But he fell a martyr (like Burns) to the society of country-gentlemen, and then of those whom they would consider as more his equals. I saw him many years ago, when he treated the masterly sketches he had by him (one in particular of the group of citizens in Shakespear " swallowing the tailor's news ") as " bastards of his genius, not his children " ; and seemed to have given up all thoughts of his art. Whether he is since dead, I cannot say : the world do not so much as know that he ever lived !

NOTES.

COMMON SENSE.

1. 2. " its price is above rubies " : said originally of *wisdom* ; cp. *Job*, xxviii. 18, ' The price of wisdom is above rubies ' ; *Proverbs*, viii. 11, ' Wisdom is better than rubies.'

12. **" fairly worth the seven "** : sc. sciences ; cp. Pope, *Moral Essays*, Ep. iv. 43,

> Good sense, which is the only gift of Heaven,
> And, though no science, fairly worth the seven.

The *seven sciences* were those embraced by the *trivium* and *quadrivium* of mediaeval schools : grammar, rhetoric, and logic (the *trivium*) ; and arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (the *quadrivium*).

15. **does not consist with** : is not compatible with.

18. **warp and trammel** : give a bias to and hamper.

22. **Common sense** : Hazlitt uses this phrase in the meaning ' natural good sense of a practical kind in everyday affairs." The Romans used their corresponding phrase, *communis sensus*, with the meaning " social good sense," *i.e.* " tact," and it is rather this meaning that he seems to illustrate by the example given below.

25. **what " comes home . . . men "** : from the Dedication of Bacon's *Essays*.

28. **never known a single instance** : *i.e.* of both kinds of wisdom, practical and theoretical, combined in one person.

2. 8. admirable Crichton : see on p. 90, l. 25.

11. **douceur** : tip (French : lit. " sweetener ").

14. **Grotius** : Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), a Dutch jurist, whose treatise *De Iure Belli et Pacis* (1625) laid the foundations of modern international law.

Puffendorf : Samuel von Pufendorf (1632-94), a German jurist, author of works on the general principles of equity and on international law.

15. **the statutes at large** : volumes containing the complete body in existing Acts of Parliament, written in full and as originally enacted. The " dog-ears " would mark the passages applicable to the occasion.

16. **premises** : (usu. *premisses*) statements of facts from which *conclusions* are drawn according to the rules of logic.

22. **tide-waiter** : customs-officer who examines luggage on board a passenger ship when it arrives at port.

syllogism : argument put in strict logical form.

23. **reductio ad absurdum** : an argument which proceeds by showing that, if the opposite of what has to be proved is assumed, absurdity results : familiar to students of Euclid.

25. **the definite and the indefinite** : here exemplified by law and custom respectively. Hazlitt evidently had in view the case of a customs-officer who had demanded a tip, which, though strictly illegal, immemorial custom entitled him to expect as a perquisite of his office.

30. **pay down the toll of** : *i.e.* sacrifice.

33. **right line** : straight line or road.

34. **Commodore Trunnion** : a nautical character in Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*.

3. 2. **mechanically** : or, to use the modern jargon, subconsciously.

3. **exceptions** : cases in which a man of common sense cannot honourably compromise.

5. **Hampden** : John Hampden (1594-1643), the Parliamentary champion, who did not " go to a stake," though he suffered imprisonment rather than pay a forced loan (1627) or " ship-money " (1636).

10. **to decry feeling** : to disparage feeling ; the latter word seems here to combine the notions of instinct, intuition, and sensibility. The eighteenth century was pre-eminently the " Age of Reason."

15. **pragmatically** : arbitrarily and officiously.

22. **formally proposed** : propounded in strict logical form.

25. **in common sense** : since the possession of this implies responsiveness to *social* environment.

26. **local** : they have a " parish pump " outlook.

27. **a great . . . metaphysician** : possibly Hazlitt himself.

31. **to let go their hold** : the grasp of an epileptic cannot be loosened during a fit.

4. 4. **Mr. McAlpine** : any Scotsman.

15. **Mrs. McAlpine** : MacAlpine's English wife.

23. " **They have no figures**," etc. : *Julius Caesar*, II. ii. 231 ; for " thought " the original has " care."

32. " **crack of ploughs and kine** " : Burns, *The Cottar's Saturday Night*, 8 : properly " crack of pleughs and kye." " crack of " = " chatter about."

33. **the Catholic question** : from Stuart times Roman Catholics had laboured under severe disabilities. These were partly removed in 1780, though the mere proposal led to the Gordon Riots. Pitt desired to relieve the Catholics, but nothing more was done till the Catholic Emancipation Bill was passed in 1829.

34. **she shall be burnt at stake** : leaders of the opposition to Catholic emancipation unscrupulously strove to rouse the mob against it by declaring that if Catholic disabilities were removed the Catholics would gain supreme power and persecute Protestants as in " Bloody " Mary's time. It was thus that the Gordon Riots of 1780 began.

5. 4. **common place** : these were the days when people who

aspired to be considered literary kept " commonplace " books, in which they entered elegant extracts—generally trite and affected platitudes—from the books they " perused." Hence the following reference to *affectation*. If Hazlitt had kept one, his quotations would perhaps have been more accurate.

29. **C——** : the poet Coleridge.

husbandry acquirements : knowledge acquired by painful methodical labour.

37. **Tom Jones** : Fielding's novel of the name.

horn-book : alphabet, elementary treatise. Early alphabets, etc., were written on cards which were mounted in frames and protected by a thin plate of transparent horn.

6. 17. **video meliora proboque**, etc. : the quotation ends *deteriora sequor*, and the whole passage (from Ovid, *Met.* VII. 20) means " I see and approve the better course : I follow the worse."

22. **escapades from** : acts of breaking loose from.

ON READING OLD BOOKS.

7. 5. **Tales of My Landlord** : a series of tales of Scottish history by Sir Walter Scott, including *The Heart of Midlothian*.

7. **Lady Morgan** : a writer of Irish novels, the best known of which is *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806).

8. **Anastasius** : a Turco-Greek tale (1819) by Thomas Hope, the imaginary autobiography of a Greek villain.

12. **Delphine** : a French novel by Mme de Staël, published in 1802. It was written in letters, a form already old-fashioned at the time.

14. **" in . . . gloss "** : *Macbeth*, I. vii. 34.

17. **mail-coach copies** : *i.e.* copies delivered by mail-coach, the quickest means of transport then known.

19. **black-letter** : a very thick and ornamental type, imitating a mediaeval style of writing. The English books first printed were in black-letter.

marble : paper variegated to resemble marble and pasted on to boards.

20. **Andrew Millar** : the publisher of Thomson's *Seasons*, Fielding's novels, and other great works of the eighteenth century.

21. **Thurloe's State Papers** : a collection of documents dealing with the years of the Commonwealth, made by John Thurloe, secretary to Cromwell, and published in 1742.

22. **Sir William Temple's Essays** : Sir William Temple (1628-1699) wrote light essays in a cultured style on such subjects as *Poetry*.

23. **Sir Godfrey Kneller** : a famous portrait painter (1648-1723).

8. 20. **there . . . appetite** : there is a lack of that confidence in what one is eating necessary to encourage appetite.

23. **rifaccimentos** : " remakings " (Italian).

9. 7. " **for thoughts . . . remembrance** " : a reminiscence of *Hamlet*, IV. v. 175-7.

8. **Fortunatus's Wishing-Cap** : according to the legend, used by Dekker in his play *Old Fortunatus*, Fortunatus possessed an inexhaustible purse and a magic cap which would carry him wherever he wished to go.

12. **My father Shandy** : Walter Shandy, father of the hero of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, had, in Hazlitt's opinion, much the same temperament as Hazlitt's own father. For further information about the elder Hazlitt see the essay on *My First Acquaintance with Poets*.

Bruscambille : Walter Shandy was fond of reading an imaginary work on long noses by one Bruscambille (Book III., ch. 35).

Peregrine Pickle : the story of a scapegrace by Tobias Smollett (1751). It contains the scandalous *Memoirs of a Lady of Quality* (here called *Memoirs of Lady Vane*).

14. **Tom Jones** : Fielding's most famous novel (1749). Lady Bellaston is the villain of the story. Thwackum, Tom's tutor, assumed piety and made great use of the rod : he was continually disputing upon ethics and metaphysics with Mr. Square, who professed himself a philosopher and maintained that man is naturally virtuous. Molly Seagrim was a village girl of whom Tom became temporarily enamoured. Sophia Western, the heroine, sent her muff to Tom, who, being found in possession of it, was accused by Squire Western first of abducting his daughter, and then of stealing the muff.

25. " **the puppets dallying** " : *Hamlet*, III. ii. 257.

36. **Christian's burthen** : Christian, in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, loses his burden of sins upon coming in sight of the cross.

38. " **Ignorance was bliss** " : quoted, with a change of tense, from Gray's *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*.

39. **raree-show** : a peep-show carried about in a box.

10. 15-16. **Ballantyne . . . Minerva press** : the former published Scott's novels, the latter exciting tales read by silly misses and ridiculed by critics.

24. **Cooke** : a publisher ; see line 37. **cuts** : *i.e.* woodcuts.

26. **Mrs. Radcliffe** : the writer of tales of horror, in most of which some apparently supernatural event was finally given a tame explanation (1764-1823).

28. " **sweet . . . belly** " : see *Revelation* X. 9.

30. " **gay . . . clouds** " : the quotations are from Milton's *Comus*.

11. 3. **Parson Adams** : the lovable but ridiculous parson in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742).

5. **Mrs. Slip-slop** : an amusing but not an estimable character in the same novel. Fanny (line 7) is the heroine.

this impression : *i.e.* Cook's edition.

15. **Major Bath**, etc. : Major Bath, who tended his sick sister with rather undignified devotion, is a character in Fielding's *Amelia* (1751) ; Commodore Trunnion is a humorous sailor in Smollett's

Peregrine Pickle; Trim, the nephew of Uncle Toby, is the hero of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*; Dame Sephora, Laura, and Lucretia appear in Le Sage's *Gil Blas*. Sancho, the unromantic squire in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, rode on Dapple.

33. **Chubb's tracts**: Thomas Chubb (1679-1746) wrote a series of pamphlets, including *A Discourse Concerning Reason*. In theology he was a deist. He began as apprentice to a glove-maker. For a considerable time he lived in Salisbury.

12. 4. "**fate . . . end**": the quotations are from Milton's *Paradise Lost, II.*, 559-60.

9. **Marlowe's Faustus**: this play of Christopher Marlowe's (1564-1593) deals with a scholar of Wittenberg, the famous German University, who sold his soul to the devil.

11. **Hartley**, etc.: David Hartley (1705-57), David Hume (1711-76), Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753), John Locke (1632-1704), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) were all philosophers.

20. **New Eloise**: Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloise* is a sentimental romance in which St. Preux is the hero and Julie d'Etanges the heroine. *The Social Contract* (l. 32), a treatise on government and the rights of man, the *Confessions* (l. 35), an autobiography, and *Emile* (p. 13, l. 1), a treatise in story form advocating education on "natural" lines, are by the same writer.

38. "**scattered . . . earth**": misquoted from Wordsworth's *Stray Pleasures*.

13. 4. **Sir Fopling Flutter**: an affected fop in Sir George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676).

18. **leurre de dupe**: decoy (French).

21. "**a load . . . navy**": *King Henry VIII.*, III. ii. 383.

30. **prejudices**, *i.e.* other people's prejudices.

14. 9. "**Marcian . . . book**": from Lamb's sonnet to "Barry Cornwall," who wrote the poem *Marcian Colonna*.

12. "**come . . . depart**": *Macbeth*, IV. i. 111.

13. "**Tiger-moth's . . . Kings**": the quotations are from Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes* (1820).

23. "**Words**," etc.: *Hamlet*, II. ii. 194.

29. **the great . . . chapel**: Edward Irving (1792-1834), founder of a church called "Catholic Apostolic," because ruled by twelve "apostles," before the death of the last of whom the world was expected to end. The Caledonian Church, where he preached before the development of these ideas, was in Hatton Garden, London.

32. **German sentiment**: the early Romantics were much attracted by contemporary sentimental German romances such as Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther* (1774), and plays, such as Schiller's *Robbers* (1777).

"**as . . . water-springs**": inaccurately quoted from Psalm xlii. 1.

36. "**giving . . . much!**": misquoted from *As You Like It*, II. i. 48-49.

15. 7. **Lyrical Ballads**: a collection of poems (1798) by Wordsworth and Coleridge, which served as a manifesto of the Romantic

movement in poetry, a movement which broke away from the correctness dear to the school of Pope and Goldsmith, who used the heroic couplet almost exclusively.

10. **novelists** : those of the eighteenth century—Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, Smollett, etc.

comic writers : writers of comedy, such as Congreve, in whose *Love for Love* (1695) appear the three characters mentioned in the next line.

17. **" know . . . prompter "** : *Othello*, I. ii. 84.

18. **Intus et in cute** : a phrase from the Latin poet Persius meaning " they are deeply implanted in me."

25. **Sir Humphrey Davy** : the inventor of the miners' safety lamp (1778-1829). He became President of the Royal Society in 1818.

28. **dramatic . . . Shakespeare** : such as Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Dekker. Lamb drew attention to these by his *Specimens from the English Dramatic Poets*, and a revival of interest in them was a characteristic of the Romantics.

32. **Periodical Essayists** : writers of essays published regularly in newspaper or review form. The *Spectator*, mostly by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, succeeded the *Tatler* (1709) mainly by Steele. These, besides essays on abstract subjects, included sketches of town and country life. The *Rambler* (1750), by Dr. Johnson, was heavier in style and subject; the *Adventurer*, edited by Hawkesworth, was modelled on the *Rambler*; the *World*, largely written by men of fashion, appeared between 1753 and 1756, and was followed by the *Connoisseur*, a paper on the same lines, edited by Colman and Thornton.

38. **Richardson** : Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) was the founder of the novel. His tales were written in letter-form and in many volumes. *Clarissa* (1748) tells how the young, beautiful and virtuous heiress Clarissa fell a victim to the arts of the libertine Lovelace, refused to marry him, and died (at considerable length) of a broken heart. Clementina (p. 16, l. 5) is the Italian heroine who falls in love with the faultless and priggish hero of *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), who, however, marries her English rival. Pamela (l. 6) is the amusing maid in the novel of that name (1740), whose great virtue and still greater prudence were rewarded by the hand of her dissolute master.

16. 6. " with . . . table " : cp. *All's Well*, I. i. 106-7.

8. **Mackenzie** : Henry Mackenzie (1745-1831) was a novelist still more sentimental and humanitarian than Sterne.

10. **gilli-flowers** : here, wallflowers (Old French *giroflé*).

13. **" that . . . broken ! "** : *Tristram Shandy*, Book VI., ch. 10.

18. **Boccaccio** : the author of the *Decameron*, a fourteenth century collection of tales supposed to be told by society refugees from the plague. The story of the Hawk (or Falcon) tells how a knight sacrificed his beloved bird to feed the sick child of a lady whom he loved in vain.

24. **Farquhar** : one of the Restoration dramatists. *The Recruit-*

ing Officer (1706), probably embodied some of his own experiences when an officer.

26. **at . . . swoop** : misquoted from *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 219.

27. **Burke's Reflections . . . Revolution** : a violent attack upon revolutionary France (1790).

17. 1. **" with . . . raptures "** : misquoted from Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*.

13. **" His form . . . obscur'd "** : *Paradise Lost*, I. 461.

16. **" falls . . . worshippers** : *Paradise Lost*, I. 591. The reference is to Dagon (1 *Samuel* v.). **grunsel** : *i.e.* ground sill, " threshold."

28. **Letter to a Noble Lord** : a defence of Burke's personal character and an attack on sympathisers with the French Revolution.

32. **Dr. Johnson** : the famous dictionary-maker wrote a heavy, balanced, Latinised style. His *Letter to Lord Chesterfield* may have suggested the comparison.

33. **Junius** : the anonymous author of *Letters of Junius* (1769-72), virulently attacking the Government.

18. 1. **" like . . . Corioli "** : *Coriolanus*, V. vi. 114-115.

20. **I am . . . genius** : *i.e.* " I am too old to add new names to my list of great writers." **niches** : the reference is to the niches in the walls of churches where stood the figures of saints.

27. **a changeling** : children who were dull and backward were formerly regarded as elf-children substituted by the fairies for human infants.

19. 1. **" worthy . . . acceptation "** : 1 *Timothy*, i. 15.

10. **Lord Clarendon** : his *History of the Great Rebellion*, *i.e.* the Civil War between Charles I. and the Ironsides, was published in 1704, though written much earlier.

18. **Froissart's Chronicles** : an interesting contemporary account of the war between France and England in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II. Hazlitt probably refers to Lord Berners's translation (1523 on). **Hollingshed** : Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577).

19. **Stowe** : John Stow, author of *Survey of London* (1598) and *The Chronicles of England* (1580). **Fuller** : Thomas Fuller, author of many books in a quaint, punning, witty style, including *The Worthies of England and Wales* (1662), a series of biographies. Fuller was one of Lamb's favourite writers.

24. **Thucydides** : a Greek historian (*c.* 400 B.C.).

25. **Guicciardini** : the writer of a *History of Italy* from 1494 to 1532.

26. **Loves . . . Galatea** : Cervantes' first book *Galatea* (1584) is an artificial pastoral romance ; his last, *Persiles y Sigismunda* (1616) is another artificial composition. A renewed delight in romances and pastorals, in chronicles and in early writings generally was common among the Romantics.

28. **" another Yarrow "** : from Wordsworth's *Yarrow Unvisited*.

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS.

20. 1. **W—m** : Wem, Hazlitt's father's home in Shropshire.

2. **1798** : It was in this year that appeared *The Lyrical Ballads*, containing *The Ancient Mariner*, the greatest of Coleridge's poems.

4. "**dreaded name of Demogorgon**" : Milton's *Paradise Lost*, II. 964-5.

5. **Unitarian** : the last half of the eighteenth century saw a great increase in the number and intellectual eminence of Unitarians or Christians who did not hold the doctrine of the Trinity. Unitarianism at this time offered a middle way between a rigid orthodoxy and the prevalent non-Christian Deism which postulated a god who created the world and then ceased to take any interest in it.

14. **talking at a great rate** : Coleridge, like Macaulay after him, was famous for his powers of conversation—or, rather, of delivering monologues.

21. "**fluttering . . . dove-cote**" : altered from *Coriolanus*, V. vi. 114-115 ; quoted also in the preceding essay, p. 18. l. 1. **Salopians** : inhabitants of Salop or Shrewsbury.

25. "**High-born . . . lay**" : from Gray's *The Bard*.

21. 1. **Siren's** : the Sirens were enchantresses whose songs lured mariners to the rocks.

4. "**motley**" : the livery of the professional jester ; hence, here, "humorous."

10. "**With Styx . . . them**" : from Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*. The Styx was a river which wound nine times round the lower regions. Pope is referring to the visit to hell of the musician Orpheus, who, in return for his song, received permission to bring back his wife Eurydice.

22. 3. "**Il y a . . . mémoire** : probably misquoted from Rousseau. "There are impressions which neither time nor events can efface. Were I to live whole centuries, the sweet time of my youth could not return to me, nor could it ever be blotted out from my memory." Similar sentiments are expressed in the *Confessions*.

9. "**And he went up,**" etc. : *St. John*, VI. 15.

10. "**rose . . . perfumes**" : from Milton's *Comus*, l. 556.

17. "**of one . . . honey**" : *St. Matthew*, iii. 3, 4.

32. **crimped** : taken by the crimps, or press-gang.

35. **pomatum** : perfumed ointment for dressing the hair. **cue** : *i.e.* queue, pigtail. In Hazlitt's time, drummer-boys, as well as sailors, wore their hair in a long plait.

37. "**Such . . . sung**" : Pope : *Epistle to Robert, Earl of Oxford*.

23. 1. **music . . . spheres** : the planets were supposed to revolve in concentric circles, thus producing a divine harmony.

7. **good cause** : the revolutionary cause.

12. **Jus Divinum** : the divine right (of kings). Hazlitt implies

that Coleridge has now exchanged his revolutionary theories for a belief in " the right divine of kings to govern wrong." Coleridge had, in fact, become conservative in outlook.

13. **" Like . . . woe "** : from Milton's *Lycidas*.

15. **half-inspired** : not a depreciatory term. Hazlitt is thinking of the " verbal inspiration " of Hebrew prophets who were credited with delivering the very words of God, not of the inspiration of poets.

18-19. **I listened . . . silence** : another dig at Coleridge's talkativeness.

28. **" As are . . . sheen "** : this and the following quotation are from Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, a source probably suggested by the indolence for which Coleridge was notorious.

38. **like what he has done** : the reference is to the quantity, not the quality, of Coleridge's writings. *The Ancient Mariner* is his only complete poem of first-class importance ; *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel* were both left unfinished.

39. **genius** : used in the original sense of " guardian spirit."

24. 8. **" somewhat . . . pursy "** : a reminiscence of *Hamlet* III. iv. 153, V. ii. 298.

18. **the cause** : the cause of civil and religious liberty ; see lines 35-6.

21. **Adam Smith** : the famous economist, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, the text-book of advocates of Free Trade.

31. **Unitarian controversy** : the controversy was not within the Unitarian Church but between the Trinitarian members of the Nonconformist Churches and those members of them, especially Presbyterians and Congregationalists, who embraced Unitarian tenets.

32. **American war** : the American War of Independence.

25. 5. **" no figures,"** etc. : from *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 231. " No mental pictures and no fancies."

26. 6-7. **Mary Wolstonecroft** : the patron saint of the movement for Women's Rights ; author of a *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. She married William Godwin, the author of *Political Justice* and the inspirer of all the English revolutionary thought of the time, and herself wrote a *Vindication of the Rights of Man* and *An Historical and Moral View of the Origin of the French Revolution* —replies to Burke's anti-revolutionary *Reflections* (see note on p. 16, l. 27). Sir James Mackintosh's book was another defence of the French position.

15. **figures** : *i.e.* figures of speech.

27. **Tom Wedgewood** : see p. 27, line 25. He was a son of the famous pottery Wedgwood, with much superfluous money and a benevolent mind. He later thought of engaging Hazlitt as a companion, but was dissuaded by Coleridge.

27. 12. **Holcroft** : Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), a political writer of novels and plays, who was tried for high treason. His *Road to Ruin* was a very successful play ; his chief novels were *Anna St. Ives* (a long Godwinian production in letters), and *Hugh*

Trevor. His autobiography was published after his death and was partly written by Hazlitt.

He : *i.e.* Coleridge.

15. **he** : *i.e.* Holcroft.

26. **wave** : waive, give up.

32. **Deva's** : the Dee's.

28. 1. **Hill of Parnassus** : the dwelling-place of the Muses.

6. **the Delectable Mountains** : a pleasant part of the pilgrim way in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where shepherds sat singing. Poets have long been conventionally represented as shepherds.

13. **Cassandra** : *Cassandre* (1642-45 in 10 vols.) was a historical romance of the time of Alexander the Great, written by La Calprenède and enormously popular.

23. "**Sounding . . . way**" : a misquotation. Chaucer, in his *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, says that the Clerk's speech was "sownynge in moral vertu," *i.e.* tending to morality.

38. **Essay on Miracles** : this famous essay argued that in proportion as an event is outside everyday experience stronger evidence is required to prove its occurrence : miracles are so unknown that no evidence is sufficient to establish them.

29. 1. **South** : Robert South (1634-1716) used in his sermons a a harmonious, rhythmical prose, enlivened by witty stories and quaint phrases.

Credat Judaeus Apella : "Let the Jew Apella believe it," a proverbial expression of disbelief. Cp. our "Tell that to the horse marines."

3. **choke-pears** : a choke-pear is a kind of pear with a rough taste and therefore swallowed with difficulty.

10. **Berkeley** : for Berkeley and Hume see note on p. 12, l. 11. Berkeley maintained that matter had no independent existence, that apart from a mind to translate the images received by the eye, shape and colour were unimaginable ; that apart from a mind to interpret the sound-waves received by the ear, sound could have no existence ; that hardness, softness, etc., depended upon a sense of touch, *i.e.* upon mind, that an object without shape, colour, hardness or other qualities was unimaginable, and hence that the only independent reality was mind or spirit. Johnson's argument merely assumed that whatever seems to exist does exist—an argument which could "prove" that the earth goes round the sun.

17. **Tom Paine** : author of *The Rights of Man* (1791-2) an acute piece of reasoning in favour of revolutionary principles. He aroused much opposition by his attacks on Christian dogmas.

22. **Bishop Butler** : author of *The Analogy of Religion*, which aims at showing that the ideas of God obtained from an observation of Nature (natural religion) are in perfect harmony with those obtained from the Bible.

30. 15. **Sir Philip Sidney** : Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) was the author of *Astrophel and Stella*, a series of sonnets full of "conceits" or whimsical, fantastic ideas or similes.

23. **Paley** : William Paley (1743-1805) more famous for his *Evidences of Christianity* than for his *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*.

31. " **Kind . . . regard** " : adapted from *Paradise Lost*, VIII. 646-50.

31. 12. **Southey's Vision of Judgment** : a panegyric (1821) upon George III., whose recently departed soul is represented as being accorded a royal welcome in Heaven. The *Vision of Judgment*, published by Murray (see l. 13), was an amusing burlesque upon Southey's poem, written by Byron.

14. **the Bridge Street Junto** : this was the Constitutional Association, with offices in Bridge Street. *Junto* : faction, political cabal. Byron's poem was not calculated to support the constitution.

36. **con amore** : eagerly.

39. **Helicon** : Mount Helicon, from which flowed two springs, was sacred to the Muses ; Hazlitt, like other writers, probably mistook Helicon for a river.

32. 4. **Tom Jones . . . muff** : see p. 9, l. 18.

7. **Paul and Virginia** : a romantic and idyllic love-story (1787) by Bernadin de Saint-Pierre.

21.-27. **He . . . sentiment** : Wordsworth was generally accused, by both friends and enemies, of cherishing an estimate of his own worth at least as great as he deserved.

32. **Camilla** : one of the least successful of Fanny Burney's novels, published in 1796. Her novels (especially *Evelina*) show a gift for sketching the life and customs of ordinary society.

35. **only one thing** : a happy married life.

33. 14-15. **Lyrical Ballads . . . Leaves** : see note on p. 20, l. 2. The Sibylline leaves, carefully preserved at Rome for consultation in emergencies, were the supposed prophecies of a " sibyl." A volume of Coleridge's poems was published under this title.

22. " **hear . . . speak** " : from Ben Jonson's *The Forest*.

35. **lamb's wool** : ale, sugar, nutmeg, and roasted apple pulp mixed.

34. 4. **Betty Foy** : " the idiot mother of an idiot boy," in Byron's phrase. Wordsworth's title was *The Idiot Boy*. The other poems mentioned are by Wordsworth. The last should be *The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman*.

10. " **In spite . . . spite** " : Pope's *Essay on Man*, I.

15. " **While . . . unconfirmed** " : Thomson's *Seasons* (Spring, l. 18), altered.

18-19. " **Of Providence . . . absolute** " : *Paradise Lost*, II. 559-60.

35. 7. **Peter Bell** : *Peter Bell*, which perhaps called forth more ridicule than any other of Wordsworth's poems, is the tale of a pedlar, with no feeling for Nature, who ill-treated his ass and suffered accordingly.

" Long and slouching was his gait."

14. **Chantry** : Sir Francis Chantrey (1782-1841), a famous English sculptor, perhaps better known as the founder of the Chantrey

Bequest, which provides a large income for the purchase of works of art.

15. **Haydon** : Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846) was a painter of large and ambitious historical pictures, who finally lost his reason and committed suicide. He was a great friend of Keats, Wordsworth, and other Romantics.

27. **Castle Spectre** : a play by Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818) who acquired his nickname by writing the absurd supernatural romance *The Monk*.

29. **ad captandum** : calculated to please.

36. 4-5. " **his . . . matters** " : a reminiscence of *Macbeth*, I. v. 63-4.

13. **lyrical** : song-like.

29. **flip** : egg-flip, a drink made of warmed ale, sugar, spice, spirit, and beaten eggs.

36. " **followed . . . cry** " : *Othello*, II. iii. 379. The " cry " is the main body of the hounds, as distinct from the leaders.

37. 10. **Kantean** : Immanuel Kant, the great German philosopher (1724-1804), in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, draws up a table of twelve categories or " radical conceptions of the understanding "— unity, plurality, totality, reality, negation, limitation, inherence and subsistence, causality and dependence, community or reciprocity, possibility and impossibility, existence and non-existence, necessity and contingency.

12-14. **Sir Walter . . . so** : a hit at the supposedly flunkey mind of Scott and of Blackwood, the founder of the publishing house of that name.

19. **Gaspar Poussin** : Gaspar Dughet, brother-in-law of Nicolas Poussin, painter mainly of landscapes and religious subjects. His *Dido and Aeneas* and *Abraham and Isaac* are in the National Gallery.

20. **Domenichino** : Domenico Zampieri (1581-1641), of some note for clearness of design and vividness of colour.

37. **spectre-ship** : " That strange shape drove suddenly Betwixt me and the sun."

38. 16. **the Death of Abel** : *Der Tod Abels*, by Solomon Gessner, published in 1758.

22. **Vergil's Georgics** : a long poem dealing with bee-keeping and agriculture.

25. **Seasons** : James Thomson's *Seasons*, published in four sections (1727-30) showed a delight in Nature unusual at the time when it was written.

29. **Cowper** : William Cowper (1731-1800) was another favourite poet of the early Romantics, in consequence of his nature descriptions in *The Task* and elsewhere.

34. **poetical diction** : *i.e.* the artificial poetic diction of Pope's age, *e.g.* " the finny tribe " for " fish."

39. 4. **Gray** : Thomas Gray (1716-1771), the author of the famous *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, though in several ways he

helped on the Romantic movement, incurred Coleridge's dislike because of his stilted diction.

5. **Pope** : Alexander Pope (1688-1744) author of *The Rape of the Lock* and *The Dunciad*, was the leader of the classic school and the master of the heroic couplet. For these reasons, for his lack of love for Nature and his " glossy, unfeeling diction," he was detested by the Romantics.

9. **Junius** : see note on p. 17, l. 33.

10. **Dr. Johnson** : it was probably the balanced, latinised style of Dr. Johnson (1709-1784) and his sturdy support of the classical school which displeased Coleridge.

Burke : William Burke (d. 1797), famous for speeches on American Independence and on the French Revolution, regarded as the first modern English Conservative. His elaborate style was less liked by the Commons than the direct manner of Fox and Pitt, the Whig and Tory leaders (who both died in 1806), but his speeches, unlike theirs, have passed into literature.

13. **Jeremy Taylor** : this Bishop of Down (1613-1667) is now remembered only for his *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*. His style at its best is full of imagination and harmony, but is sometimes over-florid and fanciful.

14. **Richardson . . . Fielding** : see notes on p. 15, l. 38 and p. 9, l. 14.

15. **Caleb Williams** : a novel by Godwin (1794) telling the story of how Williams is persecuted by his excellent master Falkland, whose secret he has discovered—the secret being that Falkland has committed murder. The story is an attack upon the force of laws and public opinion and is still extremely readable.

20. **" ribbed sea-sands "** : slightly altered from *The Ancient Mariner*.

33. **Claude** : Claude of Lorraine or Claude Gélee (1600-82), a famous French landscape-painter, particularly noted for his sky-effects.

Raphael : the most famous of the Italian painters (1483-1520), noted for his Madonnas.

35. **Buffamalco** : this should be Buffalmacco. He is said to be a follower of Giotto and to have lived at the end of the fourteenth century. To him are ascribed paintings of the Ascension, the doubting Thomas, and the Resurrection. The Cartoon referred to in the following line is the triumph of Death, believed to be the work of Ambrogio Pietro Lorenzetti of Siena (about 1340).

40. 5. **which I . . . elsewhere** : in his *Essay on The Principles of Human Action*.

26. **Mr. Elliston** : Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), an actor famous in both comedy and tragedy.

34. **Southey** : Robert Southey, Poet Laureate (1774-1843) wrote an immense amount of poetry and prose, now mostly forgotten. His *Life of Nelson*, *After Blenheim*, and *The Cataract of Lodore* are, however, still read.

41. 4. **I believe** : At the time when this essay was written (1823) there had been a quarrel with Lamb, terminated by the public praise of Hazlitt in Lamb's *Letter to Southey*.

6-7. "**But . . . tale**" : a misquotation from Wordsworth's *Hartleap Well*.

ON THE CONVERSATION OF AUTHORS—I.

42. 2. **mystery** : craft work.

13. **wanting** being without.

17. **mum-chance** : silent.

21. "**And . . . maid**" : from the description of the Knight in Chaucer's *Prologue*. **port** : demeanour.

27. "**he is . . . directly**" : from *The Return from Parnassus*. This and *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* (first completely printed in 1886) are Elizabethan plays which deal with the woes of impecunious students. These words are part of a description of one such. **make a good leg** : bow gracefully.

43. 8. **Quidnunc** : a tattling busybody (Latin—"what now?")

10. **Tull's Husbandry** : *Horse-hoeing Husbandry* by Jethro Tull (1674-1741), which gives an account of his experiments in sowing—sowing in rows far enough apart to permit of tillage by hoe throughout the period of growth.

11. **philosopher of Botley** : William Cobbett (1766-1835), whose *Rural Rides* is still read, was a politician and writer with a great interest in farming. He spent his last years on his farm at Botley in Hampshire.

15. **Venus** : Hazlitt is imagining a conversation between himself and the goddess of love.

17. **receipt-books** : recipe-books, cookery-books.

28. **belles-lettres** : elegant literature, literary studies.

44. 3. **cognizable** : knowable.

7. **Walton's Complete Angler** : another favourite book of the romantic school, for the reasons given by Hazlitt. It is, as its name implies, a treatise on fishing, written by Izaac Walton (1593-1683).

12. **Montaigne** : Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) is the father of the modern essay, especially that kind which, like Lamb's, is full of autobiographical touches.

Fearn : Charles Fearne (1742-1794), a lawyer more interested in science than in law, wrote an *Essay on Contingent Remainders and Executory Devises*.

32. "**etherial . . . tinctured**" : cp. *Paradise Lost*, II. 139 and V. 285.

38. **books of memory** : books destined to be remembered.

45. 3. "**breathe . . . fruits**" : from *Paradise Lost*, XI. 284-5.

7. "**confined and cabin'd in**" : misquoted from *Macbeth* III. iv. 24.

13. **" Verily . . . reward "** : altered from *St. Matthew* VI. 2.
14. **election** : choice.
18. **" should . . . learning "** : cp. *Merchant of Venice*, II. ix. 37.
19. **" because . . . ale ! "** : altered from *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 123, where Shakespeare has *virtuous*, not *scholars*.

46. 4. **carpings** : fault-findings.
8. **where . . . this** : *i.e.* at Winterslow.
16. **blue and red flowers** : probably cornflowers and poppies. Perhaps Hazlitt is trying to show that an author " knows nothing."
15. **" the wretched slave,"** etc. : shortened from *Henry V.*, IV. i. 274-383.
17. **Phoebus** : the sun-god.
18. **Elysium** : the abode, in classical mythology, of the shades of the good, paradise.
19. **help Hyperion . . . horse** : helps the sun on his journey, *i.e.* rises with the sun. *Hyperion* is another sun-god.
22. **Ephemerides** : books of a day, opposed to " books of memory."
29. **pretensions** : claims.
30. **take upon ourselves** : take much upon ourselves, put on airs.
32. **itch** : desire.
37. **Congreve** : William Congreve (1670-1729), author of *The Way of the World* and other plays, is a master of witty dialogue.

47. 2. **Machiavel** : Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), the author of an acute manual of kingcraft, *The Prince*, the precepts in which are *machiavellian*.
3. **clown** : rustic.
4. **New Eloise** : see note on p. 12, l. 20.
5. **" tell . . . dale "** : from Milton's *L'Allegro*.
7. **compared to** : should be *compared with*.
11. **speculative** : concerned with speculations or ideas.
17. **engrossing** : monopolising.
24. **Viscount of St. Albans** : Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626), author of *Essays* and several scientific works, long regarded as the founder of modern scientific method.
32. **" stocks . . . things "** : slightly altered from Marullus's speech to the mob in *Julius Caesar*, I. i. 36.
34. **a person . . . class** : William Godwin, see p. 48, ll. 13-14, 28, and note on p. 39, l. 15.

48. 24. **" Whose . . . superscription ? "** : misquoted from *St. Matthew*, xxii. 20.
29. **C—** : Coleridge.
32. **would be thought** : desires to be considered.

49. 1. **Prometheus** : Prometheus stole fire from heaven to animate man, whom he had formed out of clay.
15. **au fait** : up-to-date.
17. **gusto** : taste, enthusiasm. **virtù** : artistic skill or taste.
30. **flat . . . unprofitable** : a reminiscence of *Hamlet*, I. ii. 133.

50. 12. **conversible** : able to join in a conversation, fit to speak to.

16. **attending** : *i.e.* attending to.

20. **bush-fighting** : irregular warfare (lit. warfare in wooded country).

30. **bruisers** : boxers.

31. **fancy** : the "fancy" was the cant name for the boxing world.

38. **double entendre** : ambiguities, phrases capable of two (here, egal) interpretations.

39. **College** : *i.e.* Royal College of Physicians.

51. 6. **green-room** : room (originally painted green) where the actors waited in the intervals between their parts.

22. **trumps** : *i.e.* the arguments most likely to win your case.

25. **Amazons** : a mythical race of fighting women living in Cappadocia.

52. 1. **en passant** : in passing.

8. "**the fear . . . dumb**" : misquoted from Cowper's *Conversation*.

53. 14. **prudery** : assumed decorum.

16. **Boswell's Life** : the *Life of Dr. Johnson* (1791) by James Boswell, the most famous biography in English literature. Its author took shorthand notes of his subject's private conversations.

20. **Grimm's Memoirs** : the *Memoire* on Catherine II. of Russia and various volumes of Letters by Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm (1723-1807), a diplomat active in France and Russia.

54. 8. **Gil Blas** : see note on p. 11, l. 15.

14. **Venus and Adonis** : Shakespeare's famous poem on the subject of Venus's love for the young Adonis.

15. **Locke** : see note on p. 12, l. 11.

17. **Sterne** : see note on p. 9, l. 12. The chapter is one of those on *The Passport* in *A Sentimental Journey*.

19. **character** : the actor Yorick, whose skull Hamlet handles in the churchyard (*Hamlet* V. i. 202). Sterne assumed the name in his letters, etc.

Et . . . Yorick ! : and you are Yorick !

27. **through the . . . horloge** : round the face of the clock (Fr. *horloge*); for twelve hours.

37. **Brunswick family** : Hanoverian dynasty.

55. 28. "**villainous . . . it**" : *Hamlet*, III. ii. 48.

31. "**When Greek . . . war**" : misquoted from *The Rival Queens* or *Alexander the Great* (IV. ii), a tragedy (1677) by Nathaniel Lee.

36. **Free-masonry** : a reference to the order of Freemasons, a secret society with special symbolism, pass-words, etc.

56. 9. **C—** : Coleridge, as on p. 48, l. 29.

21-2. **pearls . . . adage** : a reference to St. Matthew, VII. 6 : "Neither cast your pearls before the swine."

26-7. **adepts** : those completely versed (here, in Freemasonry). See note on p. 55, l. 36.

illuminati : a name given to various sects which professed special enlightenment. Probably the reference here is to a society formed at Ingolstadt in 1776 by Adam Weishaupt. It aimed at religious

and political emancipation—republicanism and deism—and was strongly supported by Freemasonry, which it to some extent resembled.

ON THE CONVERSATION OF AUTHORS—II.

57. 1. **L—'s** : Charles Lamb. The parties were held in Mitre Court, Temple. See p. 60, l. 5.

3. **Small-coal parties** : the parties given by Thomas Britton, coal-merchant.

4. **John Buncle** : Thomas Amory (c. 1691-1788) " the English Rabelais," as Hazlitt calls him elsewhere, was the author of *John Buncle*, a novel full of philosophy, love-making, and delight in life. Hazlitt devoted a whole essay to the book.

20. " **And, in . . . remembered** " : altered from *Henry V.*, IV. iii. 51-5.

24-26. **Pope . . . Richardson** : see notes on p. 39, l. 5 ; p. 15, ll. 10, 32 ; p. 9, ll. 12-14 ; p. 15, l. 38. John Dryden (1631-1700), the greatest Restoration writer, author of prose, poetry (satirical, didactic, and lyrical) and drama. His best-known work is probably *Alexander's Feast*, one of his two Odes for St. Cecilia's Day.

Dean Swift (1667-1745) is best remembered for his *Gulliver's Travels*, and John Gay (1685-1732) for his *Beggar's Opera* and *Polly*, both recently revived.

26. **Hogarth's prints** : William Hogarth (1697-1764) was a famous painter of realistic pictures, prints of which—especially of the three series, *A Rake's Progress*, *Marriage à la Mode*, and *Industry and Idleness*—were very popular.

Claude's landscapes : see note on p. 39, l. 33.

27. **Cartoons** : great scenes from *Acts* painted by Raphael (see note on p. 39, l. 33). They are now at S. Kensington.

28. **having . . . be** : are immortal.

58. 1. **The Scotch Novels** : the Waverley Novels of Scott.

3. **the author of the Rambler** : Dr. Samuel Johnson.

4. **Boswell's Life** : see note on p. 53, l. 16.

5. **Junius** : see note on p. 17, l. 33.

6. **Gil Blas** : see note on p. 11, l. 15.

11. **Sir Thomas Browne** : a doctor of Norwich, famous for his *Religio Medici* (1642), *Urn-Burial* (1658) and other works of queer learning and subtle thought, couched in a quaint style.

12. **Dr. Faustus** : the hero of Marlowe's play of that name (acted about 1588). He was a real person, credited with having sold his soul to the devil.

14. **Donne** : John Donne (1573-1631), after a wild youth, entered the Church and died with a reputation for great saintliness. His poems set the " metaphysical " fashion—they are full of strained allusions and out-of-the-way ideas.

Sir Philip Sidney : see note on p. 30, l. 15.

19. **the sumptuous banquet** : provided by Satan after Christ's fast, see *Paradise Regained*, II. 338 ff.

28. **honorary members** : those who were not authors.

33. **piquet** : a card game.

36. **Irish blackguard . . . Scotch rappee** : kinds of snuff.

59. 1. **" two . . . Nob "** : a technical term generally accounted vulgar.

2. **Ned P——** : Edward Phillips, later clerk to the Speaker.

5. **ipse dixit** : **" himself has spoken "** : (*Latin*) dogmatic assertion.

fiat : **" let it be done "** (*Latin*).

7. **Baron Munchausen** : best known by the incredible adventures ascribed to him in the children's book of this name.

8. **Captain——** : Captain Burney, father of Fanny Burney (see note on p. 32, l. 32).

9. **Jem White** : Lamb's schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital; later employed in the treasurer's office there.

12. **" turning . . . lute "** : quoted from White's book.

13. **A——** : William Ayrton, a musician and musical critic.

Will Honeycomb : a fashionable man about town in Addison and Steele's *De Coverley Papers*.

14. **Mrs. R——** : probably Mrs. Reynolds, an old friend of Lamb's.

19. **P——** : Ned Phillips (see above, l. 2).

20. **M.B.** : Martin Burney, son of Captain Burney (see note above on l. 8).

23. **riding . . . horse** : *i.e.* talking metaphysics derived from German sources.

24. **Categories . . . philosophy** : see note on p. 37, l. 10.

25. **Road to Ruin** : see note on p. 27, l. 12.

60. 12. **Biographia Literaria** : Coleridge's most famous prose work, which largely deals with Wordsworth's poems and theories, and the distinction between Fancy and Imagination.

14. **event** : see p. 95, l. 3. Lamb, however, left Mitre Court and so broke up the meetings some five years before Napoleon left Elba.

17. **" Like . . . between "** : from Robert Blair's *The Grave*.

24. **Mr. Douce** : keeper of Manuscripts (some of which still bear his name) at the British Museum.

27. **L. H——** : Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), author of *Abou Ben Adhem*, *Rimini*, and other poems and several volumes of essays. Those who knew him maintained, in spite of Dickens's denial, that Dickens's Harold Skimpole, the shiftless butterfly in *Bleak House*, was drawn from him.

there : *i.e.* to Lamb's new address.

28. **tropical blood** : a reference to the fact that Leigh Hunt's grandfather was a West Indian clergyman.

37. **aliquando . . . erat** : " sometimes he had to be checked."

61. 3. **equivoque** : play on words.
27. **slubber over** : slur over.
31. **The Indicator** : published from 1819 till 1821.
62. 4. **Mr. Northcote** : James Northcote, R.A., who painted Hazlitt, wrote a *Life of Titian* in collaboration with Hazlitt.
10. **parroting** : mechanical repetition, as if he were a parrot.
14. **His face . . . book** : a reminiscence of *Macbeth*, I. v. 63.
there need : there are needed.
18. **beads** : bubbles of gas.
24. **spleen** : spite. The spleen was formerly thought to be the seat of anger.
28. **Catalogue Raisonné** : this publication depreciated the Old Masters in favour of living artists.
29. **Titian** : the great Venetian painter (c. 1477-1576).
32. **Sir Joshua** : *i.e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great English painter, a friend of Dr. Johnson.
34. **His** : *i.e.* Pope's.
63. 25. **Montesquieu** : author of *Persian Letters* and *The Spirit of Law*, the last advocating a constitutional monarchy.
29. **Horne Tooke** : John Horne Tooke, author of *The Diversions of Purley* (1786-1805), a book full of queer etymologies.
37. " **hear . . . silence** " : from Sheridan Knowles's *Virginius*.
64. 4. **Sterne's** : see note on p. 9, l. 12.
6. **college-man** : graduate of a college.
9. **centos** : very short selections from various authors linked together in a connected whole.
15. **he thought** : *i.e.* Tooke. **he believed** : *i.e.* the " person who knew him well."
27. **a learned professor** : Dr. Samuel Parr (1747-1825), headmaster of Norwich School and writer of many books long since dead. He imitated Johnson's dogmatic manner in conversation.
32. **Fuseli** : Henry Fuseli, an artist and the author of *Lectures on Painting*. " Fantastic hieroglyphics " refers to his allegorical paintings.
34. **Curran** : John P. Curran (1750-1817), a famous Irish politician and judge who, while a barrister, defended many well-known Irishmen charged with treason.
65. 3. **Sheridan** : Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816) author of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* and other comedies of manner.
John Kemble : a famous actor, who performed in the first play Hazlitt ever saw.
Mrs. Inchbald : a well-known actress (1753-1821) who also wrote two short novels, *A Simple Story* and *Nature and Art*.
4. **Mary Wooistonecroft** : see note on p. 26, l. 6.
5. " **from . . . day** " : from *Paradise Lost*, I. 743-4.
8. **had I not . . . Amaryllis** : " If I had not already learnt everything about love from my own experience." *Amaryllis* is a name commonly given by poets to their mistresses. See Milton's *Lycidas*. " Sport with Amaryllis in the shade."

9. **Table-talk** : a reference to Hazlitt's series of essays under this name.

10. **Peter Pindar** : John Wolcot (1738-1819) wrote under this name coarse satires, the chief of which was *The Lousiad*.

15. **G-dwin** : see note on p. 39, l. 15.

16. **Mrs. M——** : Mrs. Montagu, a life-long friend of Hazlitt and his circle, wife of Basil Montagu.

18. **coronet face** : face fit for the wearer of a coronet.

19. **H—t's** : Hunt's. **N—'s** : Northcote's.

20. **H-yd-n's** : Haydon's : see note on p. 35, l. 15.

33. **Rousseau** : see note on p. 12, l. 20.

66. 1. "**the best . . . matches**" : from Etherege's *The Man of Mode* : see note on p. 13, l. 4. The game intended is tennis proper, not lawn-tennis.

4. "**For wit . . . players**" : from a *Letter* from John Beaumont, author of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* and other plays, to Ben Jonson.

"**rest held up**" : set (at tennis) maintained.

13. **L— . . . us** : this visit of Charles and Mary Lamb took place in 1809.

14. "**like . . . Goths**" : *As You Like It*, III. iii. 8.

20. "**walked gowned**" from Lamb's sonnet on Cambridge.

There is . . . gentlemen : *i.e.* gentlemen have a particular character of their own.

67. 32. **The legend . . . women** : a reference to Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, a series of poetical lives of martyrs to love. Hazlitt is probably also alluding to his own unhappy domestic experiences.

36. **camera obscura** : lit. dark room, a darkened box, the original of the modern camera.

68. 2. **dog Tray** : from Campbell's *The Harper*.

ON ACTORS AND ACTING—I.

69. 1. "**the abstracts . . . time**" : *Hamlet*, II. ii. 508.

7. **nothing** : "of no account."

9. **they wear . . . fortunes** : "they are, as it were, in the service of the characters whom they represent."

70. 6-7. **often prevent . . . inoculating** : the metaphor is from the practice of inoculation against smallpox, then comparatively new.

12. **Beggar's Opera** : by John Gay. It celebrates the amorous exploits of Captain Macheath, a "gentleman of the road." (See note on p. 57, l. 25).

23. **George Barnwell** : a prose tragedy (1731) by George Lillo, dealing with the life and execution of an apprentice.

24. **Ordinary** : the chaplain of Newgate prison.

31. **The Inconstant** : Oriana (not Orinda), occurs in *The Inconstant*, a comedy (1703) by George Farquhar.

71. 15. **Mr. Liston** : John Lister, a famous comic actor who played from 1805 till 1837.

28. **Congreve and Etherege** : see notes on p. 15, l. 11, and p. 13, l. 4.

38. **Herald's College** : where a man's rank and genealogy can be authoritatively settled : the theatre shows us the past as it was.

40. **rush** : *i.e.* a rush candle or "farthing dip."

72. 4. **John Kemble** : John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), one of the most famous English actors.

9. **Pierre** : one of the main characters in *Venice Preserved* (1682) by Thomas Otway.

10. **Cato** : in Addison's *Cato*. **Leontes** : the jealous King in *A Winter's Tale*. **the Stranger** : in Benjamin Thompson's play of that name, translated from Kotzebue and produced in 1798.

14. **Ossian's heroes** : Ossian's poems (1760-63) were *Fingal* and *Temora*, supposed to be translations from old Gaelic. James MacPherson, who was responsible for them, perhaps had some slight basis of oral tradition to depend upon.

15. "**a tale . . . times**" : misquoted from MacPherson's *Ossian*.

18. **Mr. Bannister** : John Bannister (1760-1836), an actor of note in Hazlitt's time.

21. **The Prize** : by Prince Hoare, first played in 1793.

22. **Suett** : Richard Suett (1755-1805), another actor. **Madame Storace** : Anna Selina Storace (1766-1817), actress and singer.

23. **My Grandmother** : another play by Prince Hoare, first played in 1793.

The Son-in-Law : a comic opera (1779) by John O'Keefe.

24. **Autolycus** : the pedlar and "snapper up of unconsidered trifles" in *A Winter's Tale*.

Scrub : an amusing servant in Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem*.

25. **King , . . Edwins** : these were all actors of note in the last half of the eighteenth century. John Quick continued acting until 1813.

73. 6. "**all . . . players**" : *As You Like It*, II. vii. 139.

ON ACTORS AND ACTING—II.

74. 4. "**leaving . . . copy**" : *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 225.

15. **Colley Cibber's account** : in Cibber's *Apology for his Life* (1740), see note on p. 75, l. 24.

75. 3. **Miss O'Neill** : Eliza O'Neill (1791-1872) left the stage at the age of twenty-eight to marry a future baronet.

4. **Mrs. Siddons** : the famous tragic actress, celebrated for her performance of Lady Macbeth (1755-1831).

Mr. Kean : Edmund Kean, another famous actor.

5. **Garrick** : David Garrick (1717-1779), one of the greatest English actors and a great friend of Dr. Johnson.

13. **exhibition . . . British Gallery** : Hazlitt wrote two essays " On the Catalogue Raisonné of the British Institution," (see note on p. 62, l. 28).

17. **Covent-Garden** : Covent Garden Theatre, now used for opera.

20. **Betterton** : Thomas Betterton (1635 ?-1710), a well-known actor of the Restoration stage.

Booth : Barton Booth (1681-1733). The other actors and actresses mentioned in this paragraph were famous on the stage at various times during the period 1680-1780.

24. **Cibber himself** : Colley Cibber (1671-1757) was Poet Laureate, actor and dramatist. Pope made him the king of dunces in his *Dunciad*.

27. " **gladdened . . . nations** " : misquoted from Johnson's reference to Garrick in his *Lives of the Poets*.

31. **our hundred days** : a reference to the famous " hundred days " of Buonaparte's return from Elba in 1815.

34. **Cato . . . Tories** : the reference is to Addison's *Cato*, in which Booth performed in 1713. The play was given a political significance.

36. **Lord Rochester** : the wit and poet of the time of Charles II.

36. **Otway** : see note on p. 72, l. 9.

37. **Monimia** : the heroine of Otway's tragedy *The Orphan*, who, wedded to Castalio, is deceived by his brother Polydore.

Belvidera : the heroine of Otway's *Venice Preserved*.

76. 4. **Tatler** : see note on p. 15, l. 32. The essay referred to is No. 188.

7. **Sir Harry Wildair** : the hero of Farquhar's comedy of that title.

7. **Macklin** : Charles Macklin (1697 ?-1797), actor and dramatist.

" **the Jew . . . drew** " : Pope is supposed to have exclaimed these words on seeing Macklin play Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*.

12. **Marriage-à-la-mode** : by Dryden, first played in 1672.

77. 19. **Reynolds** : Sir Joshua Reynolds, the portrait painter.

25. " **the web . . . virtues** " : *All's Well that Ends Well*, IV. iii. 80-82.

32. **breed** : *i.e.* produce more money.

78. 1. " **like . . . deep**," *Richard III.*, III. iv. 98-100.

5. **hunks** : miser.

27. **neighbouring country** : France, where the great dramatist Molière, who was also an actor, was excommunicated by the Church for his profession.

31. **ne plus ultra** : farthest limit (lit. no more beyond, Latin).

" **a consummation . . . wished** " : *Hamlet*, III. i. 63-4.

37. **after that** : *i.e.* after the end of their provincial career, when they have obtained a London engagement.

" **the wine . . . remain** " : *Macbeth*, II. iii, 100-101.

39. **King's servants** : a title given to a company of actors in Elizabethan times : here used figuratively of any actors.

79. 7. " **Hurried . . . fierce** " : misquoted from *Paradise Lost*, II. 599.

14. " **brilliant . . . audiences** " : a stock journalistic phrase.

19. **description . . . roadside** : see Le Sage's *Gil Blas*, book 2, chapter 8.

OF PERSONS ONE WOULD WISH TO HAVE SEEN.

80. 1. " **Come . . . depart** " : *Macbeth*, IV. i. 111.

2. **B——** : Charles Lamb.

3. **The Defence of Guy Faux** : Hazlitt wrote essays on this subject.

6. **temerity** : a reference to the unconventionality of Lamb's subjects and ideas.

7. " **Never so sure . . . hate** " : Pope : *Moral Essays*, II. 51-2.

17. **A——** : William Ayrton (see note on p. 59, l. 13).

19. **Sir Isaac Newton** : author of the *Principia* and famous for his discovery of the law of gravitation.

20. **Mr. Locke** : Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* (see note on p. 12, l. 11). The reference in " greatest " is to the value of their matter, not to their style, which is clear but commonplace.

23. **stammered out** : a reference to the impediment in Lamb's speech. See also p. 83, l. 4.

81. 4. **Kneller** : see note on p. 7, l. 23.

15. **precisian** : a precise man, a puritan.

17. " **in his . . . lived** " : *Hamlet*, III. iv. 135.

19. **Sir Thomas Browne** : author of *Urn Burial*, see note on p. 58, l. 11, and reference on p. 82, l. 7.

Fulke Greville : Lord Brooke (1554-1628), the author of the unactable plays *Mustapha* and *Alaham*, of poems and of prose works, including a *Life of Sidney*. He was an eccentric writer with a taste for the abstruse, the odd, and the cryptic in style and matter.

20. **Sir Philip Sidney** : see note on p. 30, l. 15.

29. **twenty years ago** : *i.e.* in 1806.

36-7. **Dr. Johnson . . . Boswell** : see notes on p. 17, l. 32 and p. 53, l. 16.

82. 4. " **And call . . . bold** " : Milton : *Il Penseroso*, 109-110, where the reference is to Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*. Lamb is referring to those who are obscure through difficulties of style.

13. **wished . . . trees** : *Religio Medici*, part 2, section 9.

25. **Dr. Donne** : see note on p. 58, l. 14.

35. " **Here lies . . . owe** " : Donne : *Epithalamion on the Lady Elizabeth and County Palatine*.

83. 2-3. " **lines . . . abroad** " : Donne's wife had proposed to accompany him disguised as a page : hence the reference in line 18.

25. **Boreas'** : the North Wind's.

27. **Orithea** : Orithyia, abducted by Boreas.

37. **cameleons** : chameleons, lizard-like animals whose colour changes according to the colour of their resting-place.

38. **Spittles** : hospitals.

39. **fuellers** : providers of fuel.

44. **Our greatest King** : God.

84. 9. **Temple-walk** : *i.e.* walk in that part of the City known as the Temple.

13. **ruggedness of the metre** : In Chaucer's day, most final *-es* were sounded as a separate syllable. In later ages ignorance of this fact led to Chaucer's metre being considered defective. Hence the reference in line 24.

15. **gloss** : comment.

21. "**lisped . . . came**" : from Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*.

29. **devices** : ideas, notions.

30. **Mine Host of Tabard** : Harry Bailey, the host of the Tabard Inn, where the pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* assembled. *The Tabard* was in Southwark.

Petrarch : the Italian sonneteer, whose poems to Laura had an enormous influence on French and Italian literature. Chaucer apparently met him in Padua in 1372 or 1373 : he makes his Clerk claim to have heard the tale he tells from a learned clerk of that town ; and the Clerk's tale is borrowed from Petrarch.

32. **The author of the Decameron** : Boccaccio ; see note on p. 16, l. 18.

34. **Squire's Tale** : a story in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* of a magic horse and wonderful adventures .

The story of the Falcon : (or Hawk). See note on p. 16. l. 18.

The Wife of Bath's prologue : *i.e.* the prologue to the story told by the wife of Bath in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* : it narrates in a racy way the matrimonial adventures of the coarse-tongued vulgar Wife, who rode astride and dressed in flaunting finery.

Adventures of Friar Albert : another story from the *Decameron*.

40. **Cadmuses** : Cadmus, according to Greek mythology, raised an army by sowing dragon's teeth.

85. **Dante** : Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), author of the famous *Divina Commedia* (Divine Comedy), an epic vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven.

5. **Ugolino** : a Count of Pisa, who, with his three sons, was starved to death in prison. His story is told in Dante's *Inferno*.

8. **Ariosto** : author of *Orlando Furioso*, a long poem of knighthood and chivalry which greatly influenced Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (see below).

8. **Titian** : see note on p. 62, l. 29.

10. **Peter Aretine** : Pietro Aretino (1492-1557), contemporary with Ariosto, author of licentious plays and poems.

12. "**the mighty dead**" : Keat's *Endymion* or Thomson's *Winter* —the phrase occurs in both.

14. **Spenser** : Edmund Spenser (1553-98), author of the *Faerie Queene*, a romantic poem of epic proportions.

24. " **a creature . . . clouds** " : altered from Milton's *Comus*, 299-301. *element* : air ; *plighted* : interwoven.

29. " **that . . . plain** " : *The Faerie Queene*, IV. xi. 23.

31. **Captain C** : Captain Burney (see note on p. 59, l. 8).

32. **M.C.** : Martin Burney.

34. **Miss D——** : Mrs. Reynolds, who had been Lamb's schoolmistress (see note on p. 59, l. 14).

35. **Patty Blount** : Martha Blount (" Parthenia "), one of two handsome sisters, and a friend of Pope from her girlhood till his death.

Goldsmith : see note on p. 15, l. 9.

86. 5. **Pretender** : Charles Stuart, the Young Pretender, grandson of James II., who claimed the English throne and raised the " Forty-five " rebellion in Scotland.

7. " **with lack-lustre eye** " : *As You Like It*, II. vii. 22.

15. **Lake School** : a name given to the early romantic poets in consequence of the connection of some of them—notably Wordsworth—with the Lake district. Lamb cannot fairly be called a member of the School.

18. **Essay on Man** : a poem by Pope in heroic couplets.

25. **Lord Cornbury** : this and the next quotation are from Pope's *Imitations of Horace, Epistles*, I. vi. 60-62 and 50-53. William Murray later became Lord Mansfield.

37. **Tully** : Marcus Tullius Cicero, the great Roman orator.

Hyde : Lord Clarendon : see note on p. 19, l. 10.

87. 2. **Lord Bolingbroke** : St. John (see lines 4 and 13). The famous politician of Anne's reign and a great friend of Pope. The quotation is from Pope's *Epilogue to the Satires*, II.

5. **hectic** : flush.

7. **Granville** : Lord Lansdowne. The quotation is from Pope's *Prologue to the Satires*.

8. **Walsh** : William Walsh (1663-1708), poet and critic, friend of Dryden as well as Pope.

9. **Garth** : Samuel Garth (1660-1718), a physician whose poem *The Dispensary* was noteworthy for the regularity of its heroic couplets.

10. **Congreve** : see note on p. 15, l. 10.

Swift : see note on p. 57, l. 25.

11. **Talbot** : Lord Shrewsbury.

Somers : **Sheffield** : two of Pope's political friends.

12. **mitred Rochester** : Bishop (hence *mitred*) of Rochester.

13. **Dryden** : see note on p. 57, l. 24.

18. **Burnets** : Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715), a Whig historian who wrote a *History of His Own Time*.

Oldmixons and Cooks : two minor poets of Pope's day.

36. **Gay** : the author of the *Beggar's Opera*, *Fables*, and light verses : see note on p. 57, l. 25.

37. **supposed . . . finished** : *i.e.* Pope's. Pope's translation of Homer does not, as the passage suggests, catch the Greek spirit.

40. **Whitehall-stairs** : stairs at the landing stage on the Embankment near Whitehall.

coronet-coach : one ornamented with a coronet to show the owner's rank.

88. 2. **Lady Mary Wortley Montagu** : wit, beauty, and blue-stocking (1689-1762). She wrote light, satirical verses and some famous letters. After a close friendship with her, Pope assailed her with the utmost spite.

3. **E——** : Edward Phillips (see note on p. 59, l. 2).

4. **Junius** : see note on p. 17, l. 33.

6. **lay . . . mask** : a reference to the fact that the author of the famous letters was not known.

7. **Fielding** : see note on p. 9, l. 14.

9. **Richardson** : see note on p. 15, l. 38.

11. **back-shop** : Richardson was a printer as well as an author.

19. **Joseph Andrews** : see note on p. 11, l. 3.

23. **enthusiast** : *i.e.* religious enthusiast. Enthusiasm was much scorned in Hazlitt's day.

27. **nigh-sphered in Heaven** " : from Collins's *Ode on the Poetical Character*.

28. **as any in Homer** : a reference to the cloud which in that poet surrounds gods appearing to mortals.

29. **Garrick** : see note on p. 75, l. 5.

31. **J. F——** : Barron Field (1786-1846).

Hogarth : see note on p. 57, l. 26.

32. **Handel** : the great composer, famous for his *Messiah*.

34. **Lear** : *i.e.* Shakespeare's *King Lear*. **Wildair** : *i.e.* Sir Harry Wildair : see note on p. 76, l. 6.

Abel Drugger : a character in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*.

89. 1-2. **Barry . . . Pritchard** : all well-known actors about the period 1740-1760.

8. **Burke** : see note on p. 39, l. 10.

Reynolds : *i.e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds.

9. **conversation of Johnson** : in Boswell's *Life* (see note on p. 53, l. 16), Mrs. Thrale's and other accounts of the Doctor.

13. **Bartlemy-fair** : Bartholomew Fair, the great fair held yearly in Smithfield, in which travelling actors played.

14. **scarlet . . . hat** : such a garb was almost as likely on the regular stage at that time.

18. **histrionic aestus** : actor's enthusiasm.

19. **did not drop the sword** : Hamlet, with drawn sword, follows the ghost across off the stage, and then, going round the back of the stage, re-enters at the other side.

31. **Roscius** : the most famous Roman actor.

90. 4. **Kit Marlowe** : see note on p. 58, l. 12.

5. **sexton . . . Webster** : John Webster, the author of *The White Devil*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, and other plays. He was possibly sexton of St. Andrew's, Holborn.

6. **Deckar . . . proser** : Thomas Dekker, a Jacobean dramatist,

author of *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and other plays. Lamb does him better justice in his *Specimens*.

7. **voluminous Heywood** : Thomas Heywood, a contemporary of Dekker, the author of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* and very many other plays.

8. **Beaumont and Fletcher** : Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, contemporaries of Dekker, who wrote many plays in collaboration.

11. **Cowley** : Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), writer of *The Davideis* and other dull poems. The phrase is from *In Praise of Pindar*.

16. **Ben Jonson** : Shakespeare's great rival in his own day, the author of *Every Man in His Humour* (a comedy), *Sejanus* (a tragedy), and many other plays.

17. **traduce Shakespeare** : the reference is to certain uncomplimentary remarks made to Drummond of Hawthornden and reported in that author's *Conversations*, and to a few allusions in Jonson's plays.

19. **G——** : Godwin.

24. **Eugene Aram** : the " hero " of one of Bulwer Lytton's novels, a real person who was hanged in 1759 for a murder committed long before.

25. **Admirable Crichton** : James Crichton, a worthy of the sixteenth century, named " admirable " for the wide range of his abilities.

32. **H——** : Hunt.

91. 2-3. **Hobbes, Hartley, Berkeley** : see notes on p. 12, l. 11.

Butler : see note on p. 29, l. 22.

Leibnitz : a German philosopher, whose dictum that this is the " best of all possible worlds " has been persistently misrepresented to imply that this world is perfect. He had a great influence on eighteenth century religious thought.

4. **Jonathan Edwards** : an American theologian and author of the first half of the eighteenth century.

8. **Horne Tooke** : see note on p. 63, l. 29.

17. **Dugald Stewart** : an Edinburgh philosopher (1753-1828), author of *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* and *Philosophical Essays*.

20. **Thomas Aquinas** : the great Roman Catholic theologian (1226-74), the most notable of the schoolmen (not *scholiasts*) the exponents of mediaeval philosophy, noteworthy for the sometimes quibbling acuity of its reasoning and its failure to question the basis of dogma upon which it reasoned.

Duns Scotus : (*i.e.* the Scot), another famous schoolman. Our word *dunce* was taken from his name owing to the contempt felt for him by the followers of Aquinas, with whose theories he disagreed.

28. **irritabile genus** : irritable race (of authors).

30. **Gray** : see note on p. 39, l. 4.

92. 1. **Gay** : see note on p. 57, l. 25.

2. **Duchess of Bolton** : Lavinia Fenton before her marriage.

Polly : Polly Peachum, the heroine of *The Beggar's Opera*.

Steele and Addison : see note on p. 15, l. 32.

4. **Captain Sentry** : described in the second number of the *Spectator*.

Sir Roger de Coverley : the old squire round whom the famous *De Coverley* papers of the *Spectator* are grouped.

4. **Swift** : see note on p. 57, l. 25.

5. **Otway** : see note on p. 72, l. 9. He died so poor that legend said he choked himself by ravenously swallowing a crust of bread.

6. **Chatterton** : (1752-1770), the famous boy-poet who, after his forgery of the "mediaeval" Rowley poems had been discovered, committed suicide to avoid starvation.

7. **Styx** : see note on p. 21, l. 10.

8. **Charon** : the ferryman, who took souls across the Styx.

Thomson : James Thomson (1700-1748), author of *The Seasons*.

John Barleycorn : an imaginary personage, symbolising the malt (obtained from barley) used in the manufacture of beer. Burns was notoriously inclined to excessive drinking.

23. **Leonardo** : Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), famous artist (painter of *La Gioconda* and *The Last Supper*) and scientist.

24. **Archimedes** : (b. 287 B.C.), the famous discoverer of the method of determining specific gravity.

25. **Raphael** : see note on p. 57, l. 27.

Fornarini : Raphael's model and mistress.

26. **Lucretia Borgia** : the daughter of Pope Alexander VI., a notorious member of a family notorious for its crimes.

27. **Michael Angelo** : the great painter, sculptor, and architect.

St. Peter's : St. Peter's Church at Rome, largely designed by Michael Angelo.

28. **Corregio** : Antonio Allegri (1494-1534) born at Correggio, called after his birthplace. The "angel" is one from Correggio's paintings, his figures being famous for their grace.

29. **Titian** : see note on p. 62, l. 29. "Mistress" refers to the picture of *Laura de' Dianti*.

30. **Giorgioni** : one of the oldest painters of the Venetian school (1478-1511).

Guido : Guido Reni (1575-1642), whose principal pictures are *Aurora*, and a *Head of Christ*. *Dice-box* refers to his gambling proclivities. He died poor and in debt.

31. **Claude** : see note on p. 39, l. 33. Claude is represented as mirroring external Nature.

32. **Rubens** : a Flemish painter (1577-1640) famous for the brilliant colouring and movement of his pictures. *Panther* and *Satyr* refer to his pictures of Bacchanalian routs and revels.

33. **Vandyke** : the great Dutch portrait-painter (1599-1640). He painted a portrait of himself as Paris, the seducer of Helen of Troy.

Rembrandt : another famous Dutch artist (1606-1669), who painted his own portrait. His sitters were generally wealthy people, gorgeously clothed.

35. **Sir Joshua** : *i.e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great English portrait-painter (1723-1792).

39. **Being** : grammatically qualifies *we*, but is intended to refer to the " splendid apparitions."

93. 2. **melted into air** : Shakespeare's *Tempest*, IV. i. 150.

3. **Giotto** : Giotto di Bondone, a famous early Florentine artist.

Cimabue : Giovanni Cimabue (died 1302), another Florentine painter.

4. **Ghirlandaio** : Domenico Bigardi (1449-1494), also of Florence.

9. **Egad** : an ejaculation common in the eighteenth century : a disguised form of God.

Legend of Good Women : Chaucer's famous series of poems upon women who were faithful lovers.

11. **when all was dark** : these artists worked mainly upon the walls and ceilings of churches.

20. **Duchess of Newcastle** : Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle (1624 ?-1674), was a famous blue-stocking, who wrote poems, plays, and philosophical prose.

21. **Mrs. Hutchinson** : wife of Colonel Hutchinson, a Puritan officer, whose life she wrote.

25. **one** : Mary Lamb.

27. **Ninon de l'Enclos** : a famous beauty (1616-1706), credited with the secret of eternal youth.

30. **Voltaire** : the famous French writer (1694-1778), author of *Candide* and many other works, whose mocking spirit did much to prepare the way for the French Revolution.

31. **Rousseau** : see note on p. 12, l. 20.

32. **Montaigne** : see note on p. 44, l. 12.

Rabelais : François Rabelais, the great sixteenth century French writer, author of *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, satires full of wisdom and gusto.

33. **Molière** : Jean Baptiste Poquelin, called Molière, (1622-1673) was the author of many great comedies and is the French dramatist who comes nearest to Shakespeare in powers of characterisation.

35. **Tartuffe** : a comedy dealing with the hypocrisies of Tartuffe.

Racine : Jean Racine (1639-1699), the famous French tragic dramatist. His most noted play is *Phèdre*.

La Fontaine : author of the famous *Fables*, a contemporary of Racine and Rochefoucauld.

36. **Rochefoucault** : Rochefoucauld in his essays maintains that selfishness is the motive of all actions.

St. Evremont : properly St. Evremond, a French critic (1613-1703) who enjoyed a great reputation in England.

38. **Don Quixote** : see note on p. 11, l. 15.

94. 4. **Alexander** : the Great, King of Macedonia, conqueror of Greece, Egypt, Persia, etc. (356-323 B.C.).

Tamerlane : a Tartar conqueror (1336-1405), hero of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*.

Ghengis Khan : another Tartar conqueror, founder of the first Mongol empire (1154-1227).

7. **crotchet** : whim.

11. " **Your . . . reason** " : *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 155.

26. **Leonardo's** : *i.e.* Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*.

29. **Oh . . . right !** " : *Coriolanus*, II. i. 208-9. Menenius is the bluff patrician in *Coriolanus*.

31-2. **a name . . . mortality** : Christ.

95. 4. **the same . . . one** : Napoleon's escape from Elba. *Night* in the preceding line refers to the final defeat of Napoleon—a catastrophe, in Hazlitt's opinion.

ON NICKNAMES.

96. 1. **Hae nugae, etc.** : the quotation (incomplete) is from the Latin poet Horace (*Ars Poetica*, 451), and means " These trifles lead to serious (evils)."

11. **intestine commotions** : civil wars or rebellions.

12. **Vitelli and Orsini** : two noble families of mediaeval Italy that carried on a perpetual feud, like the Montagues and Capulets in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The principal feud of the Orsini, however, was with the Colonna family.

Guelphs and Gibellines : two powerful parties whose political feuds kept Italy and the mediaeval Empire in a constant state of unrest between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. The Ghibellines (usual spelling) were the aristocratic party, and supported the Emperor against the Pope ; the Guelphs were the papal and popular party.

13. **civil wars in England** : in which such nicknames were used as Cavaliers and Roundheads, Malignants and Malcontents.

the League in France : several political groups calling themselves " Leagues " appear in French History ; the one meant here is the " Holy " League, formed to prevent Henry IV. (a Huguenot) from ascending the throne unless he would agree to turn Catholic.

20. **Fox's Book of Martyrs** : John Foxe (properly so spelt), 1516-87, was a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and a theologian keenly interested in the Reformation movement. Exiled during the Marian persecutions, he returned after Elizabeth's accession. During his exile he met many of the leading reformers in Germany. His *Acts and Monuments* (1563), commonly called the *Book of Martyrs*, an account of religious persecutions by the Roman Catholics, is his only title to fame.

Neale's History of the Puritans : Daniel Neal (1678-1743).

22. **The fires in Smithfield** : kindled against " heretics " on both sides, but chiefly during the persecution of Anglican leaders in " Bloody " Mary's reign.

23. **a nickname set its seal,** etc. : the nickname meant is " heretic."
the Holy Inquisition : established 1483 as a state tribunal in Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella.

97. 1. **they simplify,** etc. : they = the combustible parts of men's passions, etc.

10. **The priest . . . the divine** : from the opening song in Gay's *Beggar's Opera.*

17. **Mussulman** : Mahommedan.

23. **barbare** : barbarian or unpolished.
Racine's verbiage : the characters in Racine's tragedies (see on p. 93, l. 35) are given to long speeches.

25. **an anti-Jacobin critic,** etc. : one of the writers in the clever anti-Revolutionary review called *The Anti-Jacobin* (1797-8), conducted by Canning and others.

35. **its countersign** : here in the sense of " opposite or contrary term." The proper meaning is " password."

98. 1. **noms des guerres** : properly *noms de guerre,* which really means " assumed names." Here used of names flung at each other by opposed parties or countries.

7. **Sound them,** etc. : *Julius Caesar,* I. ii. 145 ; " Sound them ; it [*i.e.* Brutus's name] doth become the mouth as well [as Caesar's] ; weigh them, it is as heavy ; conjure with 'em, Brutus will start a ghost as soon as Caesar."

14. **the Corsican** : the Buonaparte family was originally French, but had settled in Corsica some generations before the great Napoleon was born. The point is that Corisca was noted for brigands.

22. **" Hath Britain all the sun,"** etc. : *Cymbeline,* III. iv. 139.

26. **livers** : living beings.

30. **ten millions** : the population of England about 1801.

100. 1. **" Brevity is the soul of wit "** ; *Hamlet,* II. ii. 90.

9. **spleen** : " spite," " ill-temper," anciently supposed to be a " humour " of the bodily organ, the spleen.

12. **" the unbought grace,"** etc. : from Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution.*

17. **" Bring but a Scotsman,"** etc. : Burns, *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer,* Postscript, st. vi.

18. **Highland gill** : dram of Scotch whisky.

23. **raised a little while ago** : the reference is to the Gordon Riots (1780), described in Dicken's *Barnaby Rudge.*

28. **the knowledge of the one,** etc. : a knowledge of the history of religion in England—the constant refusals of our earlier kings to bow to the authority of the Pope, and the Reformation and subsequent religious struggles up to the final expulsion of the Stuarts—would have prevented the rise of any panic fear that the relief of Catholic disabilities would result in the restoration or ascendancy of Roman Catholicism in England.

33. **but no farther** : not to sudden and violent action.

39. **a reserve** : a reserve force.

101. 21. **in vacuo** : lit. " in a space devoid of matter " (Lat.) ; here of the action of the will untrammelled by reason or pity.

39. " **as rage with rage doth sympathize** " : a misquotation from *Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 50, where it is said of the tiger, popularly supposed to be fiercer in a storm, that

" The thing of courage,
As roused with rage, with rage doth sympathize."

102. 4. **A nickname is the heaviest**, etc. : this quotation, if it is a genuine one, does not seem ever to have been identified.

24. **cant** : slang.

" **The Talents** " : the " Ministry of All the Talents " was a nickname bestowed on the Coalition Ministry called into existence on the death of Pitt. It contained eminent men of all parties, including extreme Whigs like Fox. Lord Grenville was Prime Minister. It lasted only a year, 1806-7.

31. **their own set** : the Tory leaders ; the words refer back to *their adversaries, i.e.* the adversaries of the Whigs.

32. **Morning Chronicle** : then a daily journal on the Whig side, and at the height of its influence under the editorship of James Perry. Hazlitt occasionally wrote for it.

103. 3. **inuendos** : oblique hints or allusions ; properly *innuendos* (from Lat.).

" **With so small a web**," etc. : *Othello*, II. i. 169.

15. **called out of their names** : called by names that are not theirs (Tom does not like to be called Jack, etc.).

18. **the late Editor of the Times** : Hazlitt's brother-in-law, John Stoddart (later Sir John), appointed in 1812 by John Walter the Second, but dismissed in 1816 for his rabid attacks on Napoleon.

20. **Nicholas** : *i.e.* Napoleon had assumed that name as sounding grander than Nicholas.

23. **Nicolas Poussin** : see *Essay* on p. 191.

25. **Nicholas Vansittart** : raised to the peerage as Lord Bexley, after having been Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1812 to 1823.

32. **Causa causae causa causati** : " the cause of a cause is the cause of what is caused thereby," a philosophical commonplace ; its application here is explained by the next sentence.

104. 1. **the puppet** : *i.e.* the parrot.

3. **Hotspur would have had** " **a starling**," etc. : *I Henry IV.*, I. iii. 224.

33. **On the night that Garrick**, etc. : 10th June, 1776, at Drury Lane Theatre.

105. 17. **Junius** : see on p. 39, l. 9.

Stat nominis umbra : this motto (" the shadow of a name abides"), adopted by Junius in allusion to his anonymity, is borrowed from Lucan, the Latin poet, who (in *Pharsalia*, I. 135) says punningly of his hero Pompeius Magnus, *Stat Magni nominis umbra*, " the mere shadow of that great name (or, of the name Magnus) remains."

21. **Michael Angelo** : see on p. 92, l. 27.

ON GOING A JOURNEY.

106. 4. never less . . . alone : a reminiscence of a Latin saying.

5. " **the fields . . . book** " : from Bloomfield's *The Farmer's Boy*.

11. **carry . . . with them** : *i.e.* find the watering-place as much a town as London.

15. " **a friend . . . sweet** " : from Cowper's *Retirement*.

23. " **May . . . impair'd** " : from Milton's *Comus*, 378-80.

28. **a Tilbury** : a trap or cart, called after its inventor.

30. **impertinence** : used in its literal sense of matter not to the point.

107. 8. " **sunken . . . treasuries** " : *Henry V.*, I. ii. 165. *wrack* = wreckage.

15. **analysis** : *i.e.* of ideas.

16. " **Leave . . . repose** " : altered from Gray's *Descent of Odin*.

18. " **very . . . conscience** " : from *Othello*, I. ii. 2.

31. " **Out upon . . . fellowship** " ; I. *Henry IV.*, I. iii. 208.

35. **Mr. Cobbett** : see note on p. 43, l. 11.

108. 1. **Sterne** : see note on p. 11, l. 15.

10. **synthetical . . . analytical** : *i.e.* he prefers adding impression to impression, so as to produce a total impression, to analysing his sensations.

13. **anatomise** : dissect.

109. 4. " **give it . . . tongue** " : *Hamlet* I. ii. 250.

6. **C——** : Coleridge.

9. **didactic** : intended to impart instruction.

Pindaric Ode : Pindar, a Greek poet (c. 522-443 B.C.) wrote a number of odes on such subjects as games, wine, love, in a difficult and at first sight irregular metre. Hence the term Pindaric ode came to be used of any longish peom of an ecstatic sort in irregular verses. There are, however, a few true Pindaric odes in English, such as Gray's *Progress of Poesy*, in which the structure is governed by fixed metrical rules.

" **He talked . . . singing** " : from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, V., v. 107.

14. **they** : *i.e.* his words.

28. **Phoebe** : the moon, Diana the huntress, sister of the sun.

35. **Faithful Shepherdess** : a play by Fletcher.

110. 2. **table-talk** : the title of a series of essays written by Hazlitt.

L—— : Lamb.

15. " **take . . . inn** " : *I. Henry IV.*, III. iii. 92.

22. " **the cups . . . inebriate** " : from Cowper's *Task* IV., 39-40.

27. **Sancho** : Sancho Panza, Don Quixote's squire, who took a wise interest in food (see note on p. 11, l. 15).

30. **Shandean** : "Shandyism is the incapacity for fixing the mind on a serious object for two minutes together." (Sterne). See note on p. 9, l. 12.

31. **" Procul . . . profani "** : " far off, oh, far off let the vulgar be " : an exhortation to laymen uttered by Roman priests (see *Aeneid* VI. 258).

111. 3. **he breaks no squares** : " does not spoil my ideas :" the square was an emblem of perfection.

15. " **unhoused free . . . confine** " : altered from *Othello*, I. ii. 26.

34-5. **restores . . . society** : makes us once more natural and free from the debt of artificiality which we owe, in ordinary life, to society.

38. **proof . . . ideas** : discussed with Coleridge at Linton (see p. 39, l. 31—p. 40, l. 6, and note on p. 40, l. 5).

112. 3. **Gribelin's . . Cartoons** : Simon Gribelin, a French engraver (b. 1661), engraved the first complete set of Raphael's cartoons.

6. **Westall** : Richard Westall, R.A., an artist of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who illustrated many books, including an edition of Milton.

12. **Paul and Virginia** : see note on p. 32, l. 7.

15. **Madame D'Arblay's Camilla** : one of the later novels of Frances Burney, Madame D'Arblay. Written in a very heavy imitation of Dr. Johnson's style, it is wearisome reading.

17. **New Eloise** : see note on p. 12, l. 20.

21. **bonne bouche** : tit-bit.

28. **" green upland . . . flocks "** : this and the following quotation are from Coleridge's *Ode on the Departing Year*.

113. 2. **faded . . . day** : a reminiscence of Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*—" fades into the light of common day."

4. **" the beautiful . . . not "** : from Coleridge's *Death of Wallenstein*.

18. **drunk . . . freely** : a reminiscence of *Revelation*, XXII. 17.

114. 1. **Beyond . . . desert** : *The Man à la Mode*. See note on p. 13, l. 4.

4. **conceit** : idea, conception.

38. **tacit** : silent, uncommunicable.

115. 4. **" the mind . . . place "** : Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I. 254.

11. **" With glistering . . . adorn'd "** : *Paradise Lost*, III. 550.

14. **Bodleian** : the Bodleian library.

Blenheim : Woodstock, near Oxford. See note on p. 196, l. 22.

15. **Cicerone** : guide ; here, a man-servant.

116. 11. **Bourbons** : the dynasty restored after the defeat of Napoleon. On Hazlitt's first visit the galleries of the Louvre were filled with great paintings, the spoils of Napoleon's campaigns. After the Emperor's defeat, these were restored to their original possessors.

21. **" jump "** : a reminiscence of *Macbeth*, I. vii. 7 ; " ignore, overlook."

" Our . . . domesticated " : " when we come home, we lose all the romantic, vagabond airs we gave ourselves abroad."

23. **Dr. Johnson remarked** : perhaps another of Hazlitt's inaccurate quotations. In 1776, according to Boswell, Johnson said that one learnt very little from travelling, but made no mention of the use of the travels as a subject of conversation.

27. **kindly** : naturally.

WHY DISTANT OBJECTS PLEASE.

117. 8. **the interim** : the intervening space (usually of *time*).

9. **air-drawn circle** : the horizon.

9. " **Descry new lands,**" etc. : Milton, *P.L.*, I. 290.

11. **husk** : materialism.

13. **ethereal mould, sky-tinctured** : see on p. 44, l. 33.

20. " **But thou, oh Hope !** " etc. : Collins, *Ode on the Passions*, 29.

25. **pieces out** : forms into a perfect whole.

31. **I lived,** etc. : at Wem in Shropshire, whence the eastern end of the Berwyns is visible *westwards* (hence " setting sun ").

118. 6. " **Yarrow unvisited** " : the title of a poem by Wordsworth, the purport of which is that to revisit a place may sometimes spoil the memory of it.

26. " **a tide in the affairs of men** " : *Julius Caesar*, IV. iii. 218.

28. " **with sails and tackle torn** " : cp. Milton, *P.L.*, II. 1044, " though shrouds and tackle torn."

31. **put the will for the deed** : imagine that what we wish had happened actually did happen.

38. **the most painful** : sc. incidents.

119. 1. **startles** : rouses, and so sets it working.

5. **such tricks,** etc. : *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. i. 18.

11. **the little . . . speck** : *i.e.* the image of ourselves or our environment long years ago.

12. **hangs . . . hearts** : Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*.

15. **coil and mighty pudder** : see on p. 189, l. 17.

16. **come . . . desires** : *Much Ado*, I. i. 305.

20. **its utmost verge** : *i.e.* the verge of the " great gap " (l. 15).

24. **the stage** : of early youth.

27. **Montpelier Tea-gardens** : one of the old pleasure-gardens of London, a sort of miniature Vauxhall ; the site is now marked by the Montpelier Tavern and Street. Walworth in Hazlitt's early days (1788) was semi-rural.

30. " **bring back the hour,**" etc. : Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality*, st. x : " glory " and " splendour " should be transposed if the quotation is to tally with the original.

33. **the warders** : he means *wards* (the projections on a key), here = *bolts*.

39. **candied** : glistening (like candied fruit).

120. 1. **holy-oaks** : old-fashioned spelling of hollyhocks (the word

was originally holyhock, hock being an old word for mallow); other antique spellings in this paragraph are *pionies*, *mignionette*, and *confectionary* for peonies, mignonette, and confectionery respectively.

12. **suburb** : suburban.

13. **" that first garden,"** etc. : in reference to the Garden of Eden.

14. **slips and scions** : metaphors from gardening; both words mean cuttings taken from plants for grafting or planting.

15. **burnish out** : he probably means *burgeon* out, *i.e.* put forth shoots or buds. The word *burnish* has no meaning except " polish."

18. **" like the sweet south,"** etc. : *Twelfth Night*, I. i. 5; *south* = south wind.

25. **W—m** : Wem in Shropshire.

29. **a " thing of life "** : Byron, *The Corsair*, canto i., st. 3.

34. **" like some . . . element "** : Milton, *Comus*, 299; the original has *creatures*. To the four " elements " of the older Greek philosophers (earth, air, fire, water) Aristotle added a fifth, namely ether, or the " celestial element " of which the stars and heavens were composed. Hence sometimes in poetry, as here, the element = the sky.

37. **Leigh Hunt . . . the Indicator** : see notes on p. 60, l. 28 and p. 61, l. 31.

121. 25. **barberries** : oblong red berries, which grow on a shrub with spiny shoots, occasionally found in English gardens. Hazlitt's recollection of them, however, dates back to the time of the family's residence in America (1783-7), when he was between five and nine years of age.

33. **brick-kiln** : brick-making is carried on at Broseley, Ironbridge, and Wellington, all within easy distance of Wem for a walker like Hazlitt.

122. 21. **" How silver-sweet,"** etc. : *Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 166. (footnote). **Wilkie's Blind Fiddler** : David Wilkie (1785-1841), a Scotch artist, painted genre pictures, of which *The Blind Fiddler* (1806) is one of the best known.

123. 1. **reed** : primitive flute.

2. **fancy-stung** : roused into activity by imagination.

5. **Salisbury Plain** : over which he used to wander when he stayed or lived at Winterslow.

10. **quire** : now spelt *choir* in this sense, the word being derived from *chorus*.

11. **" like . . . perfumes "** : Milton, *Comus*, 556; the original has *steam* for " exhalation."

22. **Mr. Fearn's Essay on Consciousness** : both this *Essay* and Mr. Fearn would seem to have faded into oblivion, unless the author is to be identified with Mr. Fearn who wrote a *Treatise on Contingent Remainders* (see p. 44, l. 13). At any rate the disquisition that follows is neither scientific nor philosophical. Two general criticisms may be offered : (1) sounds and smells are registered subconsciously for the most part, while sight is deliberative and selective : we *look*

at what we wish to see and disregard whatever else may be in sight; (2) memory is of different types with different persons: some recall things by means of mental pictures, with others memory is purely verbal. This is lucidly explained by Francis Galton in his *Inquiries into Human Faculty*.

124. 9. **New Holland**: the name given to Australia by the earliest European discoverers, who were Dutchmen. Captain Cook christened New South Wales and planted the British flag there in 1770.

10. **Bassorah**: or *Basra*, on the borders of Persia and Mesopotamia, and on the Tigris-Euphrates bank not far from the head of the Persian Gulf.

24. **tops**: peg-tops, which experts can pick up on the palm while spinning.

125. 21. **apposited with**: combined with; lit. "placed side by side with"; a needless coinage.

27. **it is a conspicuous proof**, etc.: the fact he brings forward proves, not "the inaccuracy of visual ideas," but the failure of the muscles (of the arm and fingers in this case) to carry out with precision the messages of the brain.

34. **interest**: it is to the painter's (financial) interest to produce a satisfactory likeness.

126. 6. **cannot carry . . . the particular shade**: this is nonsense; the faculty of precise colour-memory is rare generally, but it is comparatively common among the Welsh; the most successful drapers in London, for instance, either are Welsh or employ Welsh buyers, who often possess colour-memory in a remarkable degree.

15. **as an almost universal rule**: this is an arbitrary dogma unsupported by the facts. With some people the case is the reverse; they love places (as many topographers do) or things (like Vachell's wonderful creation Joe Quinney) much better than persons, and like the latter less the better they know them.

23. **The thing is**: the root of the matter is.

35. **a Quarterly Reviewer**: see Introd., p. xii.

38. **wants**: lacks.

127. 4. **"There's sympathy!"**: the fact that you both have noses is a bond of union between you.

8. **upon other subjects**: besides politics.

12. **make nothing of it**: find no adequate grounds for hating him.

19. **profligate public character**: *i.e.* profligate (extravagant or corrupt) in his *public* capacity.

27. **he is——**: the blank here and below represents John Wilson, who wrote for Blackwood's under pseudonym Christopher North.

of a Scotch magazine: Blackwood's Magazine is meant. This was one of the Tory periodicals that fell foul of Hazlitt.

37. **mixed modes**: a metaphor apparently taken from music; in the technical language of ancient and mediaeval music *modes* was a term applied to scales or forms of composition.

128. 1. **"Those faultless,"** etc.: from the *Essay on Poetry* by John

Sheffield (1648-1721), first Duke of Buckingham and Normanby, one of Charles II.'s courtiers : the " Sheffield " of p. 87, l. 11.

2. " **the web of our lives,**" etc. : *All's Well*, IV. iii. 80.

THE INDIAN JUGGLERS.

129. 26. with seeming consciousness : " as if consciously."

131. 17. polish my periods : " round off and perfect my sentences."

27. **pretender** : claimant, here, false claimant (of the title of juggler).

29. **Peter Pindar** : see note on p. 65, l. 10.

30. **Mr. Opie** : John Opie, R.A., an artist of Hazlitt's day whose lectures were, according to Hazlitt, " transcribed with little variation from Fuseli's printed ones."

132. 5. Sadler's Wells : a theatre in Islington, which now aims at being the North London equivalent of the " Old Vic."

9. **put me out of conceit with** : " made me dissatisfied with."

133. 5. " In argument . . . still " : from Goldsmith's character of the schoolmaster in *The Deserted Village*.

12. **humour** : moods.

14. **case-knives** : large table-knives, carried in a case or sheath.

17. **tact** : " touch " (L. tactus).

19. **Jaggernaut** : juggernaut, a corruption of Jaggannatha, a name of the Hindu god, Vishnu. During the Car festival of the god at Puri, pilgrims have been known to throw themselves beneath the god's car and be crushed to death.

20. **gaudy day** : day of rejoicing (Lat. gaudium).

22. **Brahmins** : the Hindoo priests.

25. **The Olympic Theatre** : a London theatre of the time.

134. 4. Locksley in Ivanhoe : Locksley in Scott's *Ivanhoe* is the pseudonym of Robin Hood, famous for his skill with bow and arrow.

20. **" human face divine "** : *Paradise Lost*, III., 48.

36. **H—s and H—s** : Haydons and, probably, Hoppners, since Hoppner is the most prominent artist's name with that initial of about this time. Hoppner (*d.* 1810) was a portrait painter who flattered his subjects. For Haydon see note on p. 35, l. 15.

blandness of gusto : " graceful energy of feeling."

135. 4. snatch . . . reach of art : a reminiscence of Pope's *Essay on Criticism* : " to attain a beauty of performance which no mere mastery of technique can achieve."

7. **" commercing with the skies "** : from Milton's *Il Penseroso*.

17. **but** : except.

27. **warm or cold tone** : technical terms of painting.

28. **another sense** : *i.e.* the " finer sense " of beauty (ll. 18-20).

12. **Dutch painters** : some of the Dutch school of artists (Terborch, Jan Steen, etc.) are famous for the exact realism of their " interiors."

i.e. rooms with household groups occupied in tasks, etc., for the depth of their colouring and for their mastery of light and shade.
handling : treatment, drawing.

19. **enchanted ground** : a reference to Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* : pilgrims on the enchanted ground were overcome with a desire for sleep.

24. **like Satan** : see *Paradise Lost*, 941.

137. 10. **piquet** : a card game.

11. **harpsichord** : a predecessor of the pianoforte.

12. **nugae canorae** : "melodious trifles."

13. **Rochester** : the reference is to the Earl of Rochester under Charles II., a notorious profligate and the author of dainty lyrics, most of which are too vicious in sentiment to be reprinted.

Surrey : a reference to the Earl of Surrey who, in the reign of Henry VIII., introduced the sonnet-form into English poetry. The character given in this paragraph tallies very well with that generally ascribed to Leigh Hunt (see note on p. 60, l. 27).

25. **pith and moment**: importance (see *Hamlet*, III. i. 86).

28. **Themistocles** : a great Athenian general (*c.* 525-460 B.C.), who commanded the Greek fleet against Xerxes at Salamis.

139. 1. **Jedediah Buxton** : a calculating prodigy, whose mental powers were not otherwise high.

Napier : John Napier (1550-1617), mathematician, invented rods or "bones" to assist operations in multiplication and division.

7. **Newton** : Sir Isaac Newton : see note on p. 80, l. 19.

12. **Molière** : see note on p. 93, l. 33.

13. **author of Don Quixote** : Miguel Cervantes.

15. **A great . . . found it** : Hazlitt is apparently under the impression that a great chess-player's skill dies completely when he dies. In truth, however, the more original of his games find their way into manuals of chess-problems.

21. **" dies . . . copy "** : misquoted from *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 261.

23. **Mrs. Siddons** : generally acknowledged to be the greatest British actress.

25. **therefore** : "for that reason."

29. **mystery** : the old name for a skilled trade (O. Fr. *mestier*).

John Hunter : physiologist and surgeon (1728-1793). He made many important discoveries in anatomy and surgery.

33. **Michael Angelo** : see note on p. 92, l. 27.

36. **Sir Humphry Davy** : see note on p. 15, l. 25.

140. 1. **as wave . . . circle** : the reference is to the succession of concentric waves caused when a stone is flung into water.

25. **Wolsey** : the reference is to the great Cardinal Wolsey, chief minister under Henry VIII.

26. **Mendicant friar** : begging friar, member of the Order of St. Francis.

30. **Molière** : see note on p. 93, l. 33.

Rabelais : see note on p. 93, l. 32.

Montaigne : see note on p. 44, l. 12.

35. **article in the Examiner** : by Hazlitt himself.

36. **pat** : apt, exactly suitable.

141. 1. **fives-players** : Fives is a ball-game played with the nand by two or four players in a court enclosed on three or four sides.

6. **is dead . . . peer** : a reminiscence of Milton's *Lycidas*.

peer : equal.

16. " **Care . . . skirts** " : the meaning is that care cannot be escaped ; the Roman poet is Horace.

20. " **in the instant** " : from *Macbeth* I. v. 59. ***instant*** = present.

" **domestic . . . further** " : altered from *Macbeth*, III. ii. 25-6.

24. **making** : the technical term for completing a stroke at fives.

38. **line** : a ledge on the front wall, 4 ft. 6 in. from the floor.

142. 16. **Wordsworth's epic poetry** : the reference is to Wordsworth's *Excursion*, a long poem in blank verse.

17. **Coleridge's lyric prose** : such as that in his *Biographia Literaria*.

18. **Mr. Brougham's speeches** : Lord Brougham was a well-known writer and Whig politician (1778-1868).

19. **Mr. Canning's wit** : George Canning (1770-1827), advocate of Free Trade, wrote much witty matter for the *Anti-Jacobin*, whose aim, as its name suggests, was to combat the principles of the French Revolution.

the Quarterly : *the Quarterly Magazine* was notorious for its bitter and unscrupulous attacks upon Liberal writers. Hazlitt himself was attacked by it. **let balls** : balls which are obstructed in breach of the rules, so that the player has to serve them again. Hazlitt jokingly suggests that the Edinburgh articles do not hit the mark.

20. **Edinburgh Review** : for which Hazlitt himself wrote.

Cobbett : see note on p. 43, l. 11.

Junius : see note on p. 17, l. 33. Both Cobbett and Junius were literary " fighters."

22. **up-hill player** : player when the other side had already gained a considerable advantage.

23. **was fourteen** : *i.e.* had only to make one more to finish the game.

27. **he never . . . hop** : he never hit with all his strength in returning a ball, but let it rebound.

34. **seven and twenty aces** : an ace is a point in the game.

143. 3. **the Rosemary Branch** : both this and Copenhagen-house (l. 25) were inns with gardens and fives-courts attached.

30. **Goldsmith . . . admired** : Goldsmith, who was ugly, made this remark jestingly when two famous beauties, his friends, were attracting much admiration.

34. **Mr. Powell** : the landlord of the Court. **he** : Cavanagh.

144. 2. **politicians . . . face** : Lord Castlereagh, one of the sternest opponents of liberal and of revolutionary ideas, was then Foreign Minister.

3. **admire . . . brow** : John W. Croker was then Secretary to the

Admiralty. In this and the preceding remark Hazlitt is of course ridiculing an administration to which he was opposed.

8. **Mr. Murray the bookseller** : Murray, the publisher, against whom Hazlitt had a grievance owing to his connection with *Blackwood's Magazine*, which made scurrilous attacks on Hazlitt and his friends.

10. **waterman at Hungerford-stairs** : man who rowed passengers across the Thames, taking them up at Hungerford-stairs, near Charing Cross station.

24. **could give . . . time** : a hand is a player's turn to serve the ball.

29. **tennis-player** : the reference is to tennis proper, not to lawn-tennis.

30. **Fleet or King's Bench** : two famous debtors' prisons.

145. 5. **Mr. Peel** : afterwards Sir Robert Peel, originator of the income-tax.

Speaker : *i.e.* of the House of Commons.

11. **" Hic Jacet "** : " Here lies." The quotation is from Wordsworth's *Ellen Irwin*.

THE FIGHT.

146. 1. **" the fight . . . King "** : cp. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 633-4. Hazlitt substitutes *fight* for *play*.

5. **Jack Randall** : a famous light-weight boxer.

7. **" the proverb . . . musty "** : an allusion to *Hamlet*, III. ii. 359.

19. **the Fancy** : the boxing world.

22. **Hole-in-the-Wall** : a public-house kept by Jack Randall.

23. **author of Waverley** : Scott's authorship of *Waverley* was not at first disclosed.

147. 2. **blue ruin** : gin. The early part of the nineteenth century saw a great outbreak of gin-drinking, it being advertised that one could get drunk for 1d. and dead drunk (with straw for a bed) for 2d.

12. **Jo Toms** : Joseph Parkes, a politician.

24. **alter idem** : lit. " another the same," *i.e.* a second self.

26. **" so carelessly . . . time "** : slightly altered from *As You Like It*, I. i. 124.

29. **Jack Pigott** : probably intended for P. C. Patmore.

34. **" What more . . . liberty ? "** : from Spenser : *Muiopotmos*, ll. 209-10.

37. **vulgate** : here, the vulgar tongue, native speech : properly the Latin version of the Bible by Jerome.

148. 3. **Tom Belcher's** : the Castle Inn at Holborn. Tom's brother Jem was a famous prize-fighter.

5. **cast** : lift. 9. **cause** : *i.e.* in the law-courts.

11. **" Well, we . . . Philippi "** : slightly altered from *Julius Caesar*, IV. iii. 287.

23. **Rubicon** : the river which in classical times divided Italy from her provinces. By crossing this river into Italy at the head of his army, Julius Caesar automatically declared himself at war with Rome. To cross the Rubicon is therefore to make an irrevocable decision. Hyde Park Corner was then one of the boundaries of London : (hence for measuring distances Hyde Park Corner is still taken as the London terminus).

25. **Stage** : *i.e.* stage coach.

149. 7. " **I follow . . . pursue** " : altered from Dryden's *Indian Emperor*.

9. **White Horse Cellar** : in Piccadilly (see p. 148, l. 12).

19. **genius** : guardian spirit. Hazlitt thought his guardian angel was off duty.

21. **Jehu** : coach-driver. The reference is to the Biblical Jehu who drove furiously (2 Kings, ix. 20), but the application is in the first case due to Congreve's use of the name for a coachman in one of his plays, *The Double Dealer*.

30. **Tom Turtle** : perhaps John Thurtell, a notorious murderer.

150. 12. " **quite chapfallen** " : from *Hamlet* V. i. 211 ; " with fallen jaw."

14. **game** : topic. The metaphor is from shooting game.

16. **abstinence** : *i.e.* from alcoholic liquors. The quantities given seemed like abstinence to our hard-drinking forefathers.

24. **Martin** : Jack Martin, another prize-fighter.

26. **Gas-man** : Tom Hickman, nicknamed for his habit of " gassing " about his prowess. **under the rose** : " secretly."

32. **Mr. Richmond** : Bill Richmond, a negro boxer.

39. " **where good . . . both** " : slightly misquoted from *Macbeth*, III. iv. 38.

151. 3. **breathing** : quick run.

5. " **Follows so . . . ardour** " : from *Henry V.*, IV. i. 293.

7. **green fairy circle** : *i.e.* the prize ring ; a reference to the fact that prize fights, being illegal, had to be fought in the open fields, out of the way of the constabulary.

10. **these presents** : this present writing (legal jargon). Another reference to Hazlitt's matrimonial troubles.

11. **coloquintida** : the Spanish name for colocynth, the bitter cucumber. *Bitter as coloquintida* is from *Othello*, I. iii. 355.

aconitum : monkshood, a poisonous plant.

13. " **more . . . fantasies** " : altered from *Julius Caesar*, II. ii. 231.

16. **turn-up** : fight.

33. " **his dream . . . conclusion** " : the allusion is to *Othello*, III. iii. 428.

38. " **seriously inclined** " : from *Othello*, I. iii. 145.

152. 1. **d'un beau jour** : of a fine day (Fr.).

24. **something . . . of Gilpin** : *i.e.* something of the style of Cowper's *John Gilpin* : the reference is to the plays on phrases in which the poem abounds.

31. **frank us** : " let us have their seats free."

33. **mum's the word** : " say nothing."

153. 11. **Matthews** : another great figure in the boxing-world.

13. " **A lusty . . . able** " : slightly altered from Chaucer's *Prologue*. **ben** : be.

24. " **breed . . . slips** " : see *Henry V.*, III. i. 31.

30. **oaken towel** : slang term for a cudgel or stick.

32. " **moralized . . . similes** " : altered from *As You Like It*, II. i. 45-6.

33. **Bardolph's** : Bardolph is one of the disreputable companions of Falstaff who appears in *I.* and *II. Henry IV.*, and in *Henry V.* His red nose is constantly ridiculed.

154. 10. **Hogarth** : see note on p. 57, l. 26.

15. **Cobbett** : see note on p. 43, l. 11. The reference in l. 20 is to Cobbett's *Weekly Register*.

27. **Cribb's . . . eye** : Jem lost his eye in 1803 and was first defeated by Cribb in 1807.

155. 10. **Bill Neate** : or Neat, a famous prize-fighter of the time.

15. **Gully** : John Gully, another famous boxer, who forsook active work for " the fancy " in 1808.

19. **pending** : staked on the result of the match.

29. **vapoured** : hectored and bullied.

31. " **Alas ! . . . tamed !** " : altered from Cowper's *Task*, II. 322.

156. 1. **sable** : a reference to Richmond's black skin.

6. **as Achilles surveyed Hector** : Achilles and Hector are opposing warriors in Homer's *Iliad*.

14. **the Game Chicken** : Henry Pearce (1777-1809).

28. " **man . . . mourn** " : from a dirge by Burns of the same title.

157. 9. **schools** : *i.e.* schools of philosophy, philosophical parties.

26. " **Between . . . dream** " : see *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 63.

31. **my . . . sight** : a reference to Hazlitt's matrimonial troubles.

34. **box-coats** : coats worn on the box of a coach.

158. 15. **Ajax** : Ajax, prominent in Homer's *Iliad*, was famous for his strength.

18. " **with Atlantean . . . bear** " : from *Paradise Lost*, II. 306. Atlas supported the sky on his shoulders.

20. **Diomed** : another character in the *Iliad*.

26. **tossed . . . sun** : *i.e.* threw up a coin to decide which should fight with the sun in his eyes.

159. 20. " **grinned . . . smile** " : from *Paradise Lost*, II. 846.

35. **petit-maitreship** : foppishness.

160. 6. " **like two . . . Caspian** " : from *Paradise Lost*, II., 714-16.

24. **Dante's Inferno** : see note on p. 85, l. 4.

34. **Scroggins** : Jack Scroggins, a famous boxer, beaten by Ned Turner.

36. **Widrington** : in *Chevy Chase*.

161. 7. **Jackson** : probably " Gentleman Jackson," another prize-fighter.

21. **Mais . . . says** : see note on p. 13, l. 4.

33. **overhauls** : overalls. Hazlitt's spelling suggests a faulty etymology.

162. 26. **Goths and Vandals** : tribes notorious for their destructive invasions of the Roman Empire.

O . . . profani : see note on p. 110, l. 31.

27. **flash-men** : rogues, gipsies.

31. **a cross** : a swindle, a " put up game," the loser being " got at," and persuaded not to fight his best.

33. **sans . . . dial** : without pause, by the clock. *As You Like It*, II. vii. 33.

39. **New Eloise** : see note on p. 12, l. 20.

163. 6. **Ned Turner** : another great boxer.

14. **Mr. Windham** : William Windham, a well-known politician.

22. **Broughton and George Stevenson** : the match between these took place in 1741, not 1770.

25. **flattered . . . me** : *i.e.* made him feel complimented on his prophetic powers, since he had detected a resemblance to Windham.

164. 28. **a complete thing** : a piece of slang then current, now replaced by our " tip-top " or " ripping."

ON RESPECTABLE PEOPLE.

165. 7. **of his respectability** : *i.e.* " of his being worthy of respect " (with a play on the usual sense of the word) ; explained by the instances that follow.

166. 16. **echo the cheat** : repeat the fraudulent title, *i.e.* join in praising a man as respectable because it is to their advantage to do so. Cp. l. 22 below : " It (*i.e.* respectability) is meat, drink, etc."

167. 4. **contingencies** : accessories, *i.e.* minor appurtenances of wealth.

9. **buys golden opinions** : cp. *Macbeth*, I. vii. 32.

20. **solecism** : social error, piece of bad manners ; originally used of grammatical errors in speech.

29. " **The learned pate**," etc. : *Timon of Athens*, IV. iii. 17.

33. **Otway** : the dramatist, who died in poverty : see on p. 92, l. 5.

38. **Burleigh** : William Cecil, the first Lord Burleigh (1520-98), Elizabeth's great minister of state.

168. 3. **Butler** : Samuel Butler (1600-1680), the author of the famous anti-Puritan satirical poem *Hudibras*. The story of his neglect by the court is probably exaggerated: we know that on one occasion Charles II. gave him a present of £300 and procured him a secretaryship to the Duke of Buckingham.

9. **his monument** : Burn's monument was at last erected, and now stands south of the Calton Hill in Edinburgh.

13. " **The time**," etc. : probably an imperfect recollection of *Hamlet*, III. i. 115, " This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof."

23. **The country parson**, etc. : this picture would not be true now.

38. **Parson Adams . . . Sir Thomas Booby** : characters in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*. (For Fielding see on p. 39, l. 14). Parson Adams is generally quoted as a type of simplicity, bookishness, and evangelical piety : the elder Hazlitt might have sat for his portrait.

169. 2. **historiographers** : the word is usually applied to writers of Court memoirs and the like ; perhaps here applied to Fielding because his books were practically social histories of the period they described.

4. **Peter Pounce** : another character in *Joseph Andrews*.

5. **of this character** : the character of respectability.

7. **Captain Blifil** : the hero's treacherous friend in Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

8. **casuistry** : see note on p. 205, l. 29.

10. **somewhere** : in the *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv., 215.

11. **knaves** : *slaves* in the original.

16. **turn literary pimp** : by writing fulsome eulogies of his merits and political pamphlets in his favour.

borough-mongering : before the passing of the first Reform Bill (1832), many decayed towns returning members to Parliament were owned and controlled by small groups of landowners, who were not inaccessible to bribery. Thus the representatives of these " pocket " boroughs had often bought their seats.

21. **nabob** : strictly a Mahommedan official under the Mogul Empire, but applied in eighteenth-century literature to Europeans who made large fortunes in India as merchants or officials, and returned to England to spend them on luxury and display.

an Indian director : a director of the East India Company.

22. **slave-dealer** : slave-dealing was not made illegal in the British Colonies till 1833, nor in the other British possessions till 1834.

25. " **all honourable men** " : the phrase repeated in Mark Antony's funeral oration (*Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 87, etc.) when he refers to the conspirators who murdered Caesar.

170. 9. **They would not get a scratch**, etc. : *i.e.* would not *risk* a scratch.

24. **venting a number of common-place things** : " letting off " common-place remarks.

28. **common council men** : ordinary members (other than the Mayor and Aldermen) of a municipal council.

31. **To be an Edinburgh Reviewer**, etc. : this is half jestingly said, as the *Essay* it terminates first appeared in the *Edinburgh* ; as a matter of fact Hazlitt was remarkably proud of being a contributor to the " Blue and Buff." As Mr. Birrell remarks (p. 118 of his *William Hazlitt*), hardly any man is free from the taint of *respectability* ; and this is where it broke out in Hazlitt.

ON FASHION.

171. 1. **" Born . . . nothing "** : perhaps an echo of *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 9, " Begot of nothing but vain fantasy."

2. **" His garment neither was,"** etc. : from the description of " Fansy " in Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, III. xii. 8. " Say," fine serge ; " dight," arranged ; " Indians," Red Indians, whose war-dress includes a display of feathers ; " plight," condition ; " still he far'd as dancing," he constantly went along as if dancing.

12. **participated** : shared, taken part *in*.

15. **" the great . . . small "** : Cowley, *Imitations of Horace* (Od. III. i.).

24. **sink . . . into disrepute** : this was truer in Hazlitt's day than it is now.

172. 8. **harlequin** : variegated, multicoloured, like the harlequin's tights.

9. **sterling** : of real worth.

25. **abortive** : because nothing permanent is achieved.

31. **sublimated essence** : refined essence, quintessence. When a substance has been purified by being converted into vapour and then allowed to solidify again, it is said to be sublimated.

33. **winds** : turns and twists about.

35. **common hunt** : the bulk of the pack, as opposed to the leading hounds ; called elsewhere the " cry " (see note on p. 36, l. 36).

173. 1. **still** : in the Shakespearian sense, " constantly."

15. **a very singular air** : and singularity is not fashionable.

19. **virtu** : strictly, love of the fine arts (Ital.) ; here of special moral or intellectual eminence.

25. **the great** : in a worldly sense.

26. **éclat** : conspicuous success, loud applause (Fr.).

38. **several stories high** : the fashion of wearing wigs was introduced into England about 1660, and lasted till about 1810. Wigs reached their most exaggerated dimensions in the reigns of Anne and George I.

174. 4. **Lord Foppington** : a character in Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1697). Vanbrugh borrowed the character of Sir Novelty Fashions in Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*, and ennobled him under this title.

Tam : to pronounce *o* as *a* was a mark of social distinction in the Stuart period ; Titus Oates aped the world of gentility by his favourite expression " Lard, lard ! ". So in the memory of many now living it was a mark of social superiority to speak of " huntin', shootin,' and fishin.' "

10. **peremptory and unequivocal** : because fashion's decrees admit of no option or alternatives.

13. **specific levity** : a phrase coined on the anology of *specific gravity*. Whatever is most trifling, and therefore lightest, rises to the top.

15. **deformity** : if the King has a club foot, all the courtiers limp.

16. **inward and invisible grace** : adapted from the phrase " inward and spiritual grace " in the Prayer-book Catechism.

27. **a rustic air** : the court of George III. was inexpressibly stodgy and frumpish.

29. **and are, when unadorned, etc.** : Thomson's *Seasons* : *Autumn*, 204.

32. **Memoirs of the Fudge Family** : *The Fudge Family in Paris* was an amusing social skit (1818) consisting of poems in the form of letters, purporting to be edited by " Thomas Brown the Younger," *i.e.* Thomas Moore (1779-1852). A sequel, *The Fudge Family in England*, appeared in 1835.

Niobe : a method of hair-dressing in vogue in Hazlitt's time was copied from the head of Niobe in the group of statuary at Florence called by her name. Her hair is braided over her ears. Niobe, according to the Greek legend, was turned into stone while weeping for her children, who were slain by a jealous goddess.

33. **poke bonnet** : Salvation Army lasses wear poke bonnets.

34. **marchands des modes** : lit. purveyors of (dress) fashions : usual French term for fashionable dressmakers (Worth, Paquin, etc.).

175. 7. " **the city madam,**" etc. : *As You Like It*, II. vii. 74.

21. " **the age is grown so picked,**" etc. : *Hamlet*, V. i. 151 ; *picked*, " fastidious."

22. " **galls his kibe** " : scrapes the chilblain on his heel.

25. **the highest distinction** : in reference either to the Prince of Wales's feathers, or to the head-dress of débutantes at Court.

31. **linsey-wolsey** : dress-material of inferior wool woven on linen or cotton warp.

33. **take the wall of** : the gutters or " kennels " of London and other large towns were practically open sewers till the beginning of last century. People dressed in fine clothes would always, if possible, take the wall side, or that remote from the kennel, to avoid being splashed.

37. **extension of his figure** : embellishment of his appearance ; cp. the phrase " cut a brilliant figure."

38. **petit-maitre** : dandy (Fr.).

176. 5. **Aldermanbury** : between Gresham Street and London Wall. The undertaker and the haberdasher probably frequented the Southampton Coffee House, which Hazlitt " used."

11. **the story in Peregrine Pickle** : from this passage of Smollett Bernard Shaw may have derived the *dénouement* of his *Pygmalion*.

17. **address** : outward bearing, deportment.

29. " **lisping, and ambling,**" etc. : a misquotation of *Hamlet*, III. i. 151, " You jig, you amble and you lisp, and you nickname God's creatures."

177. 8. **whether " in a high or low degree "** : cp. Pope, *Epilogue to Satires*, I. 137 :

> " Virtue may choose the high or low degree,
> She's still the same beloved, contented thing."

15. **"And thin partitions,"** etc. : cp. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I. 164,

> "Great wits to madness sure are near allied,
> And thin partitions do their walls divide : "

and Burns, *Verses to my Bed* ;

> "Thin partitions do divide
> The bounds where good and ill reside."

16. **the one . . . the other** : gentility and vulgarity respectively.
19. **jealous of** : solicitous in maintaining.
20. **Miss Burney** : see note on p. 32, l. 32.
25. **Mr. Smith and the Brangtons** : amusing types of vulgarity figuring in Fanny Burney's *Evelina*.

ON PREJUDICE.

This is one of the most closely-reasoned and philosophical of Hazlitt's *Essays*. To study it should be a valuable lesson in these days of violently contrasted opinions on politics and morals. Extreme and uncompromising views in these spheres invariably betray lack of knowledge, experience, and intelligence. Hazlitt here explains this with admirable lucidity ; yet with the ordinary inconsistency of human nature he himself was a violent champion of the French Revolution and of Napoleon.

178. 9. **monstrous** : portentously large.
17. **suspending our judgments** : causing us to refrain from forming or giving a definite opinion.
22. **the vacuum . . . of facts** : *i.e.* mind empty of facts. The metaphor is continued in what follows : in a vacuum, or space pumped empty of air, solid bodies fall much faster than in the ordinary atmosphere.
27. **cell** : ignorance *imprisons* the mind.
28. **native** : with which we are *born*.

179. 3. **varying our conceptions** : revising our ideas in the light of experience.
4. **mistake a part for the whole** : *i.e.* of the truth ; as when knowing a few facts we base a totally false theory on them. *E.g.* having been swindled by a Jew we may erroneously conclude that all Jews are dishonest. 8. **fallibility** : liability to error.
12. **all our knowledge . . . lying** : because all our knowledge lies.
16. **introverted** : turned inwards upon ourselves, so that our opinions are not based on observation of facts, but deduced from our inner consciousness.
19. **concrete substance** : so we talk of a "mass" or "cake" of prejudice.
23. **Fuller** : see p. 19. l. 19. The quotation is from a sketch in *The Holy and Profane States* entitled *The Good Sea-captain*.
25. **the two ideas** : of *black skin* and *human being*.

Mr. Murray : the publisher (1778-1843), the friend of Byron. As the publisher of the *Quarterly Review*, he was especially obnoxious to Hazlitt.

28. **we strove hard**, etc. : from 1793 to 1815. Hazlitt ignores the fact that during the greater part of this time we were fighting, not against the French Republic, but against Napoleon ; and that not only Napoleon, but the preceding republican governments, engaged violently in wars of aggression against the rest of Europe.

32. **Holland, Switzerland** : the only European republics, except for the temporary so-called Republics established by Napoleon. Holland, under the leadership of William of Orange, established its independence in defiance of Philip II. of Spain in 1580 : the existence of the Swiss Republic was recognised by the Emperor in 1499.

33. **performed quarantine** : so as to be free from the power of infecting those who hear it.

180. 4. **There is then a real grossness** : Hazlitt seems to imply that if a prejudice stands the test of time it must be a valid opinion ; but this is by no means true.

7. **concrete nature** : the way in which it forms, so to speak, a solid mass of inter-dependent ideas : cp. " coalesce " below, and p. 179, l. 19, above. By derivation (from Lat. *concresco*) the word concrete denotes what has grown together so as to form a mass.

13. **or outward symbols** : *e.g.* to object to the use of incense in Anglican churches is to attack the whole Anglo-Catholic doctrine ; to denounce fox-hunting is to attack the existing fabric of society. Cp. what follows. 18. **mutually** : he means *severally*.

33. **the Inquisition** : see on p. 96, l. 23.

36. **that . . . chrysolite** : cp. *Othello*, V. ii. 145 :

> If Heaven would make me such another world
> Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
> I'd not have sold her for it.

The *chrysolite* is one of the precious stones enumerated in Revelation, xxi. 20.

181. 11. **trial by reason** : *i.e.* the right to test the truth of Catholic doctrine by reason.

14. **implicit faith** : faith not arrived at by independent judgment but involved in the general belief of the Church ; thus, unreserved, blind faith.

28. **stand proxy for** : guarantee (by assenting to it).

30. **sinister** : evil-motived.

ON CANT AND HYPROCRISY.

182. 1. **If to do . . . princes' palaces** : *Merchant of Venice*, I. ii. 14.

4. **Mr. Addison** : Joseph Addison (1672-1719), poet, essayist, and author of the tragedy *Cato* (see on p. 75, l. 35). He held office under Queen Anne, and married the Dowager Countess of Warwick, who

had a life-tenancy of Holland House, Kensington. His essays in the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* are famous for their purity of style.

Curl: Edmund Curll, a fashionable (though disreputable) bookseller of the day, on rather familiar terms with the chief men of letters of the period.

6. **Canary**: sc. wine; a favourite drink from Shakespeare's time to George II.'s.

9. **some persons . . . exclaim**: this refers especially to the words *and yet*; these "nice" (*i.e.* critical) persons thought it incongruous that so self-indulgent a man should thus pose as a Christian exemplar.

10. **the young Earl of Warwick**: Addison's stepson.

21. **"The spirit was willing,"** etc.: cp. St. Matt., xxvi. 41.

24. **that a man**, etc.: the order should be "that a man who admires Raphael or Shakespeare is a hypocrite because he cannot, etc.

183. 2. **this would be cant**: we should rather call it *affectation*. *Cant* is generally used of jargon and slang, or of pious expressions that come from the lips only.

5. **belie**: fail to be in accordance with them.

14. **in proportion to**, etc.: a clumsy sentence, ungrammatical even, the comparative *more violent* being an error. The meaning is "why the reaction of the one should not be violent in proportion to the length the other goes."

25. **the author of the SPECTATOR**: Addison. For the *Spectator* see note on p. 15, l. 32.

37. **video meliora**, etc.: Ovid, *Met.* vii. 20: see note on p. 6, l. 17.

184. 6. **grimace**: affected look, and so affectation.

10. **his whole behaviour**: *whole* is emphatic.

36. **the scene . . . in the "Duenna"**: *The Duenna*, Sheridan's only comic opera, was first produced at Covent Garden in 1775. The scene referred to was, for obvious reasons, omitted in the revival of the play in 1924-5.

185. 1. **liquorish**: a vulgar error for *lickerish*, which means "greedy" in respect of any sensual appetite. Hazlitt evidently uses the phrase in the text in the sense "fondness for liquor."

3. **that he has therefore**, etc.: *i.e.* [the opinion] that he has therefore, etc.

the next: sc. life.

5. **olla podrida**: hotch-potch of various meats and vegetables (Spanish).

14. **the Fornarina**: see on p. 92, l. 25.

19. **in his 'Castle of Indolence'**: the quotation is from canto I., st. lxix.

24. **tight**: trim and well-built.

25. **mew**: place of confinement, cell; formerly a cage in which hawks or other birds were kept whilst moulting (= *mewing*, from Lat. *mutare* through French).

30. **none**: non-existent.

186. 23. **jealous of**: intolerant of.

32. **nicety**: propriety.

34. **not out of . . . decency** : these phrases modify *must be observed*.

37. **Lord Shaftesbury** : the third Earl (1671-1713), a writer on philosophical subjects. His *Characteristics* is his best-known work : cp. p. 209, l. 7.

38. **Theist . . . Atheist** : the former believes in the existence of a God supernaturally revealed to man : the atheist disbelieves in the existence of any God.

187. 8. **a point of conceivable faith** : a conceivable degree of faith.

12. " **upon this . . . time** " : *i.e.* in this temporary world ; the quotation is from *Macbeth*, I. vii. 6.

18. **like other . . . misunderstandings** : as, between lovers.

22. **heretic . . . sceptic** : a *heretic* is, strictly, one who has broken away from a Church, and holds unorthodox opinions : thus to Roman Catholics Anglicans are heretics, and to English Churchmen Dissenters are heretics. A *sceptic* is one who doubts the truth of a particular religion or of all religions, or holds that we can have no certain knowledge about God (*sceptic* in this last sense means much the same as *agnostic*).

23. **the host** : the Bread used in the service of the Mass (the Eucharistic service), and raised or " elevated " by the priest during the Consecration prayer.

26. **to his reason or his religion** : to his reason, if a sceptic ; to his religion, if a heretic.

27. **vespers** : evening service.

37. **mountebank** : a lying quack.

188. 2. **Vallombrosa** : a beauty-spot 20 miles from Florence, 3000 feet above sea-level among the forests of the Apennines. Cp. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 302.

3. **the Grand Chartreux** : the celebrated Carthusian monastery near Grenoble, in the Auvergne. The Carthusian Order was founded by St. Bruno in 1086.

5. **misdeem** : form a wrong judgment.

10. **for a constancy** : perpetually.

15. **mortified** : in the theological sense, *i.e.* with body and passions brought into subjection by self-denial.

16. **the spirit . . . the flesh** : the opposite order (flesh . . . spirit) is required by the context.

20. **grossnesses** : excesses.

22. **Ramadan** : the ninth month of the Mohammedan year, during all the daylight hours of which rigid *fasting* (not feasting) is observed.

29. **the Koran** : the Mohammedan sacred book, a collection of Mohammed's revelations, written in Arabic.

30. **fallacy** : unsoundness.

39. **Methodism** : the Evangelical preaching of Charles and John Wesley and George Whitefield resulted in the formation of several societies (ultimately Nonconformist churches), whose members practised a strict *method* of life.

189. 4. **It may** : *sc.* be.

8. **it is the abstract idea,** etc. : a man may, in the cool light of reason, strongly condemn a sin, and yet be guilty of it himself under temptation.

12. **want of . . . keeping** : lack of self-restraint.

16. **the ideal and the physical** : in Biblical language, the spirit and the flesh (passions).

17. " **mighty coil and pudder** " : great fuss and commotion ; pudder (*King Lear*, III. ii. 50 in Folios) = pother ; for " coil " see *Much Ado*, V. ii. 98, and *Hamlet*, III. i. 67.

26. **to have all,** etc. : to have nothing but . . .

190. 6. **who maintains vice in theory** : whose motto is " Evil, be thou my good."

7. **conception** : sc. *of* virtue.

8. **fiends only,** etc. : *i.e.* none but fiends. A hypocrite, Hazlitt implies, is by no means the worst of men ; he at least shows some respect for virtue ; indeed, hypocrisy has been defined as " the homage which vice pays to virtue."

ON A LANDSCAPE OF NICOLAS POUSSIN.

1. " **And blind Orion . . . morn** " : from Keat's *Endymion*, II. 198.

3. **Nimrod** : " a mighty hunter before the Lord " : *Genesis* x. 9.

9. " **a hunter . . . shade** : *i.e.* in the underworld.

9. **Diana** : the goddess of the moon.

14. " **grey . . . dance** " : *Paradise Lost*, VII. 373-4. **Pleiades** :the friends of Diana. Orion's pursuit of them led Zeus, the father of gods and men, to turn both him and them into constellations.

22. " **shadowy sets off** " : *Paradise Lost*, V. 43.

25. **first . . . things** : the new-created world. *integrity, i.e.* " wholeness " is contrasted with the confusion or chaos from which the world was made.

192. 1. **Sir Joshua** : *i.e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds. See his Discourses on Art, lecture 5, for an account of Poussin's work.

6. " **denote . . . conclusion** : *Othello*, III. iii. 428.

8. **embodies high fictions** : *i.e.* " gives to airy nothing a local habitation," a body.

12. " **take up . . . balance** : altered from *Isaiah*, xl. 15 and 12.

32. **high and palmy estate** : a reminiscence of *Hamlet*, I. i. 113.

34. " **so potent art** " : *Tempest*, V. i. 50.

193. 3. " **more than natural** " : *Hamlet*, II. ii. 384.

8. " **gives to airy nothing . . . name** " : a reference to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. i. 16.

15-18. The reference here is not, of course, to modern cubists, symbolists, etc., but to painters of historical, mythical, and other imagined scenes.

38. **Titan** : the Titans were, according to Greek mythology, a race of gods which preceded Zeus (the Roman Jupiter). Hyperion, the sun-god, was a Titan.

194. 5. **Poussin** : Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665). His paintings are often of classical subjects, and he has a Greek conception of beauty. He is the French master in the classic style.

14. **Pan's pipes** : reed-pipes like those used by the shepherd-god Pan.

17. **Bacchus** : the god of wine. **Jupiter** : the chief of the gods (Zeus). Poussin painted pictures showing both of these, such as *The Education of Jupiter* (National Gallery, Berlin).

24. **Campagna** : the country just outside Rome.

30. **his Life** : *i.e.* Memoirs of the Life of Poussin, by Lady Callcott, published in 1820.

35. **Mr. West** : Benjamin West (1738-1820), President of the Royal Academy (see l. 36), "struck a blow for realism," but his style did not outlive him.

195. 5. **Plague of Athens** : there are several Plague pictures by Poussin, such as *The Plague* (Royal Academy, Lisbon) and *The Philistines struck by the Plague* (Louvre). Probably Hazlitt means one of these.

12. "**o'er-informed**" : over-filled. The word is from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, in which he says that Shaftesbury's soul "o'er-informed its tenement of clay."

14. **set impression** : fixed look.

21. "**the very . . . whereabout**" : *Macbeth*, II. i. 58.

23. **keeping** : self-consistency.

26. **Aurora** : the goddess of the dawn. The picture intended is probably *Cephalus and Aurora* (National Gallery).

29. **old Tithonus** : Aurora's husband, a mortal, though granted immortality, was not granted perpetual youth. See Tennyson's poem *Tithonus*.

196. 8. **Rubens** : the great Flemish painter (1577-1640), noted for the almost excessive vitality of his figures.

10. **Bacchantes** : female devotees of Bacchus.

13. "**Leaping . . . spring**" : Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I. vi. 14.

22. **Blenheim** : the estate of the Marlboroughs (Churchills) at Woodstock, near Oxford, so called after the Duke of Marlborough's great victory. Hazlitt had visited the famous collection of paintings there (see p. 115, l. 14).

28. **the figure . . . below** : in *Bacchanalian Festival* (National Gallery).

shepherds : in *The Shepherds of Arcadia*, now in the Louvre.

32. **the Vale of Tempe** : a valley of Thessaly between Olympus and Ossa, praised by Vergil for its beauty.

34. **Et . . . vixi** : "I too lived in Arcadia."

37. "**the valleys . . . use**" : a reminiscence of Milton, *Lycidas*, 136.

197. 7. "**within . . . matter**" : *Hamlet*, I. v. 103.

11. "**the sober . . . bliss**" : Milton, *Comus*, 263.

14. " **he . . . unwise** " : a reminiscence of Milton's sonnet *To Lawrence*.

20. **embrowned** : the reference is to the brownish shades of pictures whose colouring has been softened by time.

29. **Rembrandt . . . Raphael** : see notes on p. 92, ll. 25-33 for Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, Claude, Guido, Raphael. The Caracci were three Italian artists, Ludovico (1555-1619), Agostino (1557-1602), Annibale (1560-1609). Reynolds praises the " twilight . . . diffused over " Ludovici's pictures.

198. 8. " **Old genius . . . wend** " : Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, III. vi. 31-2.

22. **Burleigh** : the home of the Cecils.

23. **Mr. Angerstein** : John Julius Angerstein (1735-1823), merchant and amateur of art, acquired the collection which formed the basis of the National Gallery.

Lord Grosvenor : Robert, second Earl of Grosvenor and first Marquis of Westminster (1767-1845).

Marquis of Stafford : Leveson-Gower, George Granville, first marquis (1758-1833) added to the unrivalled collection of paintings at Bridgewater House, and was one of the first owners of pictures in London to allow the public access to them.

28. **The Louvre is stripped** : see note on p. 116, l. 11.

29. **he** : *i.e.* Napoleon.

30. **Iron Crown** : a crown of gold set with jewels, made originally for the kings of Lombardy, so called because it enclosed within its round a circlet of iron said to have been made from one of the nails used at the Crucifixion. It was supposed to give the holder the sovereignty of all Italy. For this reason Napoleon was crowned with it at Milan on May 26, 1805.

ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING.—I.

199. 1. " **there . . . know** " : a parody of

> " There is a pleasure in poetic pains
> Which only poets know."

(Cowper, *The Task*, II. 285).

9. **humours** : a reference to the old belief that a man's disposition and health were governed by certain humours.

16. " **study . . . style** " : a reminiscence of Cowper, *The Task*, III. 207.

200. 1. **spolia opima** : " opulent spoils," used by the Romans of the armour of an enemy stripped from him after defeat in single combat. Hazlitt implies that the painter, in his " battle " with his art, counts the exact representation of even " a streak in a flower " a great prize.

16. **Werter** : *i.e.* Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther*, a great favourite with the Romantic school. Young Werther was a prototype of the Byronic hero, full of mysterious melancholy.

201. 5. **gloss and relish** : freshness and attractiveness.

6. " **more . . . tale** " : *King John*, III. iv. 108 (altered).

17. **However** : however much.

18. " **My mind . . . is** " : from a poem by Sir Edward Dyer (*d.* 1607) printed in most anthologies.

19. " **to set . . . men** " : from Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, Book I. ch. 8, section 3.

22. " **Pure . . . mind** " : Dryden, *Translation of Persius*, Satire II.

30. **discharged . . . sentiment** : the metaphor is from the paying of debts at an inn, where they were " scored up " on a slate.

202. 15. **air-drawn** : imaginary. The word recalls the air-drawn dagger seen by Macbeth.

28. **this miracle . . . pencil** : see note on p. 92, l. 32.

31. **Rembrandt** : see note on p. 92, l. 33.

33. " **light thickened** " : a reminiscence of *Macbeth*, III. ii. 50.

39. **Wilson** : Richard Wilson (1714-82) one of the greatest English landscape painters, but always very much neglected by customers, though his ability was acknowledged. A disciple of Salvator Rosa, Gaspar Poussin, and Claude, he was greatly inspired by the scenery of Italy.

203. 15. **Claude** : see note on p. 39 l. 33.

26. **marble** : a reference to the " marbled " or variegated effect of the clouds.

27. **great master** : *i.e.* Claude.

29. **old woman** : this picture is now in the Maidstone Museum.

204. 2. **art . . . so** : a reference to the Latin *Ars longa, vita brevis* —art is long, time is short.

14. **Sir Joshua** : *i.e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds. This opinion is the theme of much of Reynold's *Discourses on Art*. Hazlitt preferred the minute realism of the Dutch school to more " impressionistic " methods.

22. **chiaro scuro** : (Italian) " clear-obscure," the artistic mingling of light and shade.

205. 5. **introversion** : turning in.

14. " **as . . . face** " : *I. Corinthians*, xiii., 12.

16. " **sees . . . things** " : Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*, l. 49.

17. **mechanical instruments** : microscopes, etc. Hazlitt is contrasting scientist and artist.

28. **Jan Steen** : a Dutch painter (1626-1679), a considerable master of realism.

Gerard Dow : another member of the Dutch school (1613-1675), famous for the exact realism of his interiors.

29. **casuist** : decider of problems of conscience, one who applies general principles of conduct to particular difficulties. The word is often, as here, used with a touch of contempt as of one given to hair-splitting or self-deception in matters of conscience.

30. "**mist . . . theologians**" : *Paradise Lost*, V. 435-6.

35. **intuitive eye** : a mind which sees the truth by intuition instead of laboriously reasoning it out.

38. **vehicle** : a technical term for the medium by which the solid colour is conveyed to the canvas.

206. 12. **Opie** : see note on p. 131, l. 30.

Fuseli : see note on p. 64, l. 32.

Northcote : see note on p. 62, l. 4.

21. **Richardson** : Jonathan (1665-1745), portrait-painter, author of *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, *Anecdotes of Painting*, and other works.

23. **Michael Angelo** : see notes on p. 92, l. 27.

31. **affronted . . . would not** : *i.e.* insulted Michael Angelo, whom he, the Pope himself, would not.

207. 23. **Rubens** : for the artists here mentioned see notes on p. 92, ll. 23-33.

Andrea del Sarto : a celebrated Italian painter (1486-1531). He was not, however, a slow and careful worker : Browning, in his *Andrea del Sarto*, suggests that lack of high ideals and conscientious painstaking was one reason why this artist failed to reach the front rank.

29. "**that . . . thought**" : adapted from Donne's *The Second Anniversary* :—

> " her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
> That one might almost say her body thought."

34. **Schiller** : Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), the great German dramatist, author of *The Robbers*, *Wallenstein*, etc.

208. 13. **rope-dancer** : Hazlitt speaks from experience, having at one time attempted to learn the art.

16. **Abraham Tucker** : an eighteenth century writer, author of the philosophical *Light of Nature Pursued* "by Edward Search," originally in seven volumes but abridged by Hazlitt to one.

36. **impasting** : laying on of colours thickly and boldly, from Italian *impasto*, a term used to express the thickness of the paint. Rembrandt used a thick impasto, Raphael a very thin one.

209. 7. **Shaftesbury's Characteristics** : a book by the Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), a set of essays on various subjects.

8. **Gribelin** : see note on p. 112, l. 3.

10. "**riches fineless**" : *Othello*, III. iii. 173. **fineless** : unlimited.

22. "**ever . . . sings**" : 2 *Henry IV.*, IV. iv. 92.

39. **the Exhibition** : *i.e.* the Royal Academy exhibition. The picture was hung in 1806.

210. 1. **Honourable Mr. Skeffington** : Sir Lumley St. George Skeffington (1771-1850), fop and playwright, was a friend of the Prince Regent, who consulted him about dress. He invented a colour known as Skeffington brown, and was satirised by Byron in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

5. **Austerlitz** : Napoleon's great victory over the Austrians and Russians—a matter for rejoicing to Hazlitt.

9. **Platonic year** : the time during which the axis of the earth makes a complete revolution—about 26,000 years. At the end of this time, according to Plato, history was to begin repeating itself exactly.

14. **Livy** : the great Latin historian.

ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING—II.

211. 4. **" Whate'er . . . Poussin drew "** : Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, I., stanza 38.

Lorraine : Claude Lorraine (1600-82), called the Raphael of landscape-painting for his exquisite colouring (see note on p. 39, l. 33).

5. **savage Rosa** : Salvator Rosa (1615-73). Reynolds says "his rocks, trees, sky, even to his handling, have the same rude and wild character which animates his figures."

10. **Wilton-house** : the property of the Earls of Pembroke.

11. **Blenheim** : see note on p. 115, l. 14.

14. **Knowsley** : the Earl of Derby's estate. The painting, of course, deals with the biblical story of the feast of Belshazzar.

15. **Burleigh** : see note on p. 198, l. 22.

18. **" bosomed . . . trees "** : Milton, *L'Allegro*, l. 78.

26. **tally** : in the days when few could write, accounts were kept by means of a tally or stick upon which notches were made to represent figures. The stick was then split longitudinally, so that each party had a record of the notches, and fraud was prevented by the necessity for the two halves to correspond or " tally." Hazlitt means that the picture exactly matches nature.

212. 7. **Orleans Gallery** : a collection formed by a Duke of Orleans, part of which was exhibited in London during 1799, when Hazlitt saw it. The exhibition was named the Orleans Gallery.

8. **old school** : *i.e.* classical school of Raphael and his successors.

14. **" hands . . . swayed "** : altered from Gray's *Elegy*.

15. **" a forked . . . air "** : *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV. xiv. 5.

20. **Titian . . . Caracci** : see notes on p. 92, ll. 29, 30 ; p. 37, l. 20 ; p. 57, l. 27 ; and p. 197, l. 29.

26. **fury . . . nothing** : from *Macbeth*, V. v. 27-28.

32. **Provoked Husband** : a play by Vanbrugh, one of the writers of Restoration Comedy, in which Colley Cibber (see note on p. 75, l. 24) had a hand (see l. 38).

33. **Ruysdael** : a great Dutch painter of landscapes, noted for their rich, warm colouring and their fidelity to nature (*c.* 1628-1692).

Hobbima : Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709), one of the greatest Dutch landscape painters.

213. 6. **Titian's Mistress** : see note on p. 92, l. 29.

15. **gusto** : enthusiasm. This is one of Hazlitt's favourite qualities in painting, and he devotes a whole essay to its consideration.

34. **un beau jour** : " a splendid day."

214. 1. **Transfiguration,** etc. : most of these pictures and those mentioned on the preceding page had been stolen by Napoleon from conquered cities and were afterwards returned.

11. " **if . . . damned** " : altered from *As You Like It*, III. ii. 37.

16. **Elgin marbles** : the famous statues brought from Greece by Lord Elgin in 1812, and now in the British Museum.

18. " **Quatre . . . Citoyens** " : " Past four o'clock ; closing-time, citizens ! " During the Republic *citoyen* (citizen) was the only recognised mode of address, all titles being abolished. Hence the ejaculation in l. 19.

30. **experimentum crucis** : (Latin) crucial experiment, experiment which finally settles a matter ; cp. the phrase " crux of the matter."

215. 1. **Thuilleries** : properly *Tuileries*, the great palace and grounds of the French royal house at Paris.

3. " **casual . . . unendeared** " : from *Paradise Lost*, IV. 766.

12. **Titian . . . Correggio** : see notes on p. 62, l. 29, and p. 92, l. 28.

21. **Where . . . also** : from *St. Matthew* vi. 21.

216. 5. **cabinet-picture** : properly small valuable paintings from the old masters such as would be preserved in cabinets ; later, any small picture.

8. **megilps** : magilp, a mixture of linseed oil and mastic varnish used to convey the dry colour to the canvas.

handling : the art of managing the brush.

25. **alchemist** : one searching for the means to transmute baser metals to gold. The philosophers' stone (see p. 220, l. 35) was supposed to do this.

28. **pretended** : claimed.

217. 32. **Guido** : see note on p. 92, l. 30.

218. 7. **Claude** : see note on p. 39, l. 33.

25. **Richardson** : see note on p. 206, l. 21.

28. **knowledge of hands** : *i.e.* recognition of the identity of the painter of a picture.

219. 2. **three arts** : painting, poetry, and sculpture.

5. **one of the haughtiest popes** : see p. 206. ll. 29-32.

220. 5. **Parmegiano** : Francesco Mazzola (1504-40) of Parma, noted for his treatment of classical subjects. See further below, l. 25, etc.

Annibal : *i.e.* Annibal Carracci (see note on p. 197, l. 29).

12. **Guido Reni** : see note on p. 92, l. 30.

221. 3. **Vasari** : Giorgio Vasari (1512-1574), artist; author of *Lives of the Painters* and a treatise *On Technique*.

10. **Gandy** : William Gandy (d. 1729), an artist whose portraits show real genius.

13. **undoubted . . . style** : *i.e.* he was the first to use the style afterwards perfected by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

22. **Dan Stringer** : portrait-painter and a student of the Royal Academy about 1770. His portrait heads and comic sketches were good.

26. **Burns** : the reference is, of course, to Robert Burns, the poet, whose death was hastened by intemperance.

30. " **swallowing . . . news** " : from *King John*, IV. ii. 195.

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